



# CURRENT AFFAIRS REFRESHER FOR IBPS PO MAIN

## HIGHLIGHTS OF UNION BUDGET 2015-16

### TAXATION

- Abolition of Wealth Tax.
- Additional 2% surcharge for the super rich with income of over Rs. 1 crore.
- Rate of corporate tax to be reduced to 25% over next four years.
- No change in tax slabs.
- Total exemption of up to Rs. 4,44,200 can be achieved.
- 100% exemption for contribution to Swachh Bharat, apart from CSR.
- Service tax increased to 14 per cent.

### AGRICULTURE

- Rs. 25,000 crore for Rural Infrastructure Development Bank.
- Rs. 5,300 crore to support Micro Irrigation Programme.
- Farmers credit - target of 8.5 lakh crore.

### INFRASTRUCTURE

- Rs. 70,000 crores to Infrastructure sector.
- Tax-free bonds for projects in rail road and irrigation.
- PPP model for infrastructure development to be revitalised and govt. to bear majority of the risk.
- Atal Innovation Mission to be established to draw on expertise of entrepreneurs, and researchers to foster scientific innovations; allocation of Rs. 150 crore.
- Govt. proposes to set up 5 ultra mega power projects, each of 4000MW.

### EDUCATION

- AIIMS in Jammu and Kashmir, Punjab, Tamil Nadu, Himachal Pradesh, Bihar and Assam.
- IIT in Karnataka; Indian School of Mines in Dhanbad to be upgraded to IIT.
- PG institute of Horticulture in Amritsar.
- Kerala to have University of Disability Studies.
- Centre of film production, animation and gaming to come up in Arunachal Pradesh.
- IIM for Jammu and Kashmir and Andhra Pradesh.

### DEFENCE

- Allocation of Rs. 2,46,726 crore; an increase of 9.87 per cent over last year.
- Focus on Make in India for quick manufacturing of Defence equipment.

### WELFARE SCHEMES



- GST and JAM trinity (Jan Dhan Yojana, Aadhaar and Mobile) to improve quality of life and to pass benefits to common man.
- Six crore toilets across the country under the Swachh Bharat Abhiyan.
- MUDRA bank will refinance micro finance orgs. to encourage first generation SC/ST entrepreneurs.
- Housing for all by 2020.
- Upgradation 80,000 secondary schools.
- DBT will be further be expanded from 1 crore to 10.3 crore.
- For the Atal Pension Yojana, govt. will contribute 50% of the premium limited to Rs. 1,000 a year.
- New scheme for physical aids and assisted living devices for people aged over 80.
- Govt. to use Rs. 9,000 crore unclaimed funds in PPF/EPF for Senior Citizens Fund.
- Rs. 5,000 crore additional allocation for MGNREGA.
- Govt. to create universal social security system for all Indians.

## RENEWABLE ENERGY

- Rs. 75 crore for electric cars production.
- Renewable energy target for 2022: 100K MW in solar; 60K MW in wind; 10K MW in biomass and 5K MW in small hydro

## TOURISM

- Development schemes for churches and convents in old Goa; Hampi, Elephanta caves, Forests of Rajasthan, Leh palace, Varanasi, Jallianwala Bagh, Qutb Shahi tombs at Hyderabad to be under the new tourism scheme.
- Visa on Arrival for 150 countries.

## GOLD

- Sovereign Gold Bond, as an alternative to purchasing metal gold.
- New scheme for depositors of gold to earn interest and jewellers to obtain loans on their metal accounts.
- To develop an Indian gold coin, which will carry the Ashoka Chakra on its face, to reduce the demand for foreign coins and recycle the gold available in the country.

## FINANCIAL SECTOR

- Forward Markets Commission to be merged with the Securities and Exchange Board of India.
- NBFCs registered with the RBI and having asset size of Rs 500 crore and above to be considered as 'financial institution' under Sarfaesi Act, 2002, enabling them to fund SME and mid-corporate businesses.
- Permanent Establishment norms to be modified so that mere presence of offshore fund managers in the country does not lead to "adverse tax consequences."

Some major points of the rail budget are-

- No increase in fares for daily passengers but railway freight hiked 10% for urea, 2.7% for cement and 6.3% for coal, 0.8% for iron and steel.
- No new trains will be announced for this current year.
- Increase in the number of bio toilets and vacuum toilets like airplane in trains.
- Water vending machines will be installed on stations to arrange drinking water for passengers.
- 'Operation 5 minutes', where passengers traveling unreserved can purchase a ticket in 5 minutes. He also announced to launch mobile app for purchase of unreserved tickets.



- For security and convenience of passengers he announced two 24 \*7helplines 138 for general complaint and 183 for security complaints.
- On priority basis Prabhu announces to install Surveillance cameras in ladies compartments and selected coaches for women's safety because “Nari-Surakasha” is major issue for everyone in previous years.
- Over 400 railway stations will lashed with Wi-fi in coming year,he alsoannounced to give mobile charging facility to all coaches including general coaches.
- Speed on nine railway corridors to go up to 200 km per hour.It will helptrains to increase their average speed.
- Booking facility of Wheel chairs for senior citizen will be available through online.
- Prabhu introduces satellite railway terminals in major cities and centrally managed Rail Display Network is expected to be introduced in over 2K stations over the next 2 years.
- Railways will also going to establish Four Railway Research Centres in four universities.
- Cleanliness also got priority in Prabhu’s budget he announce “Swach-Rail” scheme.
- To make train and stations clean ,this scheme is launched under “Swach Bharat Abhiyan”. Under Swach-Rail scheme railways are going to setupnew department of cleanliness and going to engage professional agencies for training of cleaning staffs on 650 major stations.
- Railway is going to setup Alarm announcing system at no man crossing with help of IIT Kanpur.



## NEWS RELATED TO BANKING

### 1. RBI Policy Review

RBI RATES & RATIOS	
Policy Repo Rate:	6.75%
Reverse Repo Rate:	5.75%
Marginal Standing Facility Rate:	7.75%
Bank Rate:	7.75%
CRR :	4%
SLR :	21.5%

- Reserve Bank of India (RBI) cut its repo rate by 50 basis points (bps) to 6.75%. The extent of the slash was unanticipated, but its timing was in line with the view that sufficient clarity on monsoon, pace of economic recovery and a likely delay in the policy rate hike by the US Federal Reserve will open up room for a repo rate cut in September.
- Till now, the RBI has cut the repo rate by 125 bps since it first started lowering the rate in January this year. With inflation within target, continued windfall from lower global oil and commodity prices, postponement of the rate hike by the US Fed, and the need to push up pace of domestic demand recovery prompted the RBI move.
- The onus is now on the government to remove impediments to transmission while following a prudent fiscal path, and for banks to pass on the rate cut.
- The RBI's policy will remain accommodative but it will maintain caution in terms of demand-side pressures on inflation that could arise from the Seventh Pay Commission payout expected in the next two fiscals.
- **HIGHLIGHTS**
  - Repo rate cut by 50 bps to 6.75%, lowest in 4 years
  - Reserve repo rate cut to 5.75%
  - CRR unchanged at 4%
  - Growth estimate for 2015-16 marginally cut to 7.4% from 7.6%
  - CPI inflation expected to reach 5.8% in January 2016
  - Inflation is likely to go up from Sept
  - FPI investment limit in debt securities to be fixed in rupee term
  - FPI investment limit in govt bonds to be hiked to 5% by 2018
  - RBI to issue final guidelines on base rate computation by November-end.

- Fifth Bi—monthly Monetary Policy on December 1

## 2. RBI names SBI, ICICI as systemically important

- The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) designated India's top two banks by assets — State Bank of India (SBI) and ICICI Bank Ltd. as Domestic Systemically Important Banks (D-SIBs).
- **Systemically important banks** are perceived as banks that are '**Too Big To Fail (TBTF)**'. This perception of TBTF creates an expectation of government support for these banks at the time of distress. Due to this perception, these banks enjoy certain advantages in the funding markets.
- According to the RBI, while SBI will have to set aside 0.6 per cent of the loan as capital buffer, ICICI Bank will have to keep 0.2 per cent of loan as capital buffer. This means that if SBI and ICICI Bank were each setting aside Rs 1 earlier, they will now have to set aside Rs 1.60 and Rs 1.20, respectively.
- The RBI also said that a foreign bank designated as a Global Systemically Important Bank (G-SIB) and having branch presence in India, will have to maintain additional CET1 capital surcharge in India as applicable to it as a G-SIB, proportionate to its Risk Weighted Assets (RWAs) in India.

## 3. RBI Relaxes Norms of FPI Investment in Government Debt

- Easing norms for foreign ownership of government debt, RBI announced higher investment limits in rupee terms in government securities by foreign portfolio investors (FPIs) with a view to bringing in an **additional Rs 1.2 lakh crore by March 2018**.
- The announcement follows a decision by RBI to fix FPI investment limits in rupee terms and raise it in phases to reach 5 per cent of the outstanding stock by March 2018.
- Aggregate FPI investments in any central government security will be capped **at 20 per cent of the outstanding stock of the security**.

## Small Banks and Finance Banks

**'in principle' approval to 10 companies to set up small finance banks aimed at giving loans to farmers and small businesses. The selected applicants are:**

- Au Financiers (Jaipur),
- Capital Local Area Bank (Jalandhar),
- Disha Microfin (Ahmedabad),
- Equitas Holdings (Chennai),
- ESAF Microfinance and Investments (Chennai),
- Janalakshmi Financial Services (Bengaluru),
- RGVN (Northeast) Microfinance (Guwahati),
- Suryoday Micro Finance (Navi Mumbai),
- Ujjivan Financial Services (Bengaluru) and
- Utkarsh Micro Finance (Varanasi).

What they will do?



- The small finance bank will primarily undertake basic banking activities of acceptance of deposits and lending to unserved and underserved sections including small business units, small and marginal farmers, micro and small industries and unorganised sector entities.
- There won't be any restrictions in the area of operations of small finance banks.
- The minimum paid-up equity capital for small finance banks shall be Rs 100 crore.
- The promoter's minimum initial contribution to the paid-up equity capital of such a small finance bank should at least be 40 per cent and gradually brought down to 26 per cent within 12 years from the date of commencement of business of the bank.

### Payments banks

- The Reserve Bank of India has decided to grant "in-principle" approval to the following 11 applicants to set up payments banks.
  1. Aditya Birla Nuvo Limited
  2. Airtel M Commerce Services Limited
  3. Cholamandalam Distribution Services Limited
  4. Department of Posts
  5. Fino PayTech Limited
  6. National Securities Depository Limited
  7. Reliance Industries Limited
  8. Shri Dilip Shantilal Shanghvi
  9. Shri Vijay Shekhar Sharma
  10. Tech Mahindra Limited
  11. Vodafone m-pesa Limited
- The 'in-principle' approval granted will be valid for a period of **18 months**, during which time the applicants have to comply with the requirements under the guidelines and fulfil the other conditions as may be stipulated by the Reserve Bank
- The Payments Bank will be set up as a differentiated bank and shall confine its activities to acceptance of demand deposits, remittance services, Internet banking and other specified services.
- Payments Banks will initially be restricted to holding a maximum balance of Rs. 1 lakh per individual customer
- They will be allowed to issue ATM/debit cards as also other prepaid payment instruments, but not the credit cards.
- These banks can also distribute non-risk sharing simple financial products like mutual funds and insurance products.

### 4. Rs 2000-cr financial inclusion fund

- The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) announced the creation of a new financial inclusion fund with a corpus of **Rs 2,000 crore** to support "**developmental and promotional activities**" like **financial inclusion and research and transfer of technology**. The fund will not be utilized for normal business/banking activities. After the completion of the initial five years, the RBI decided to merge both the **Financial Inclusion Fund and Financial Inclusion Technology Fund** into a single fund — **Financial Inclusion Fund (FIF)**.



- The contribution to FIF would be from the “interest differential” in excess of 0.5 per cent on Rural Infrastructure Development Fund (RIDF) and Short Term Cooperative Rural Credit (Refinance) Fund (STCRC) deposits on account of shortfall in priority sector lending kept with NABARD by banks.
- The new FIF will be administered by an **Advisory Board** constituted by the government and will be maintained by **National Board for Agriculture and Rural Development (NABARD)**.
- In financial year 2007-08, the government had formed two funds namely the FIF and the Financial Inclusion Technology Fund (FITF) with a corpus of Rs500 crore, each.

## 5. RBI issues new norms for Strategic Debt Conversion

- RBI issued new norms for Strategic Debt Conversion (SDR) which will give lenders the right to convert their outstanding loans into a majority equity stake if the borrower fails to meet conditions stipulated under the restructuring package.
- Banks are required to identify the stress signs, and set up a Joint Lenders’ Forum (JLF) to draw up a corrective action plan involving rectification and restructuring. The JLF should actively consider such change in ownership under the SDR framework.
- The new management should not have any links to the old promoters.
- The new promoter has to acquire the entire 51%. However, if foreign investment is limited to less than 51%, the new promoter should own at least 26%.

## 6. RBI panel for conversion of UCBs into regular banks

- To overhaul and strengthen the **urban cooperative bank (UCB) structure**, an internal committee of the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has recommended that **UCBs with business size more than Rs 20,000 crore** be allowed to convert into universal commercial banks while those with a lower size be converted to small finance banks.
- A nine-member committee chaired by **deputy governor R Gandhi** to study and recommend improvements for UCBs released its report on Thursday where it detailed recommendations, including **conversion of UCBs into full-service commercial banks, small finance banks and even issuing fresh licences to set up new stronger UCBs**.
- The committee also recommended **stiff entry-point norms for new UCBs**.
  - Minimum capital requirement would be Rs 100 crore,
  - To operate beyond two districts and as a state-level UCB, **the capital threshold is Rs 50 crore**
  - at the district level, a capital of **Rs 25 crore** if the UCB
- The committee recommends that licences for setting up UCBs be issued only to financially sound and well-managed cooperative credit societies with at least five years of track record as it reckons setting up an UCB from scratch is difficult.
- The committee was constituted in January by RBI to study the UCB model and it had to study the recommendations of earlier committee reports while making its own.

## 7. RBI: Revised PSL Norms

- The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) said that medium enterprises, social infrastructure and renewable energy would form part of priority sector in addition to the existing categories.
- It prescribed a target of 8 per cent for the small and marginal farmers within agriculture. RBI asked banks to achieve this in a phased manner, that is, 7 per cent by March 2016 and 8 per cent by March 2017.

- A target of 7.5 per cent has been prescribed for micro enterprises, which also has to be achieved in a phased manner, that is, 7 per cent by March 2016 and 7.5 per cent by March 2017.
- There is no change in the target of 10 per cent for weaker sections, it added
- Foreign banks, with 20 branches and above, already have priority sector targets and sub-targets for agriculture and weaker sections, which are to be achieved by March 31, 2018, as per the action plans submitted by them and approved by RBI. The sub-targets for small and marginal farmers and micro enterprises would be made applicable post 2018 after a review in 2017, the RBI said.
- “Foreign banks with less than 20 branches will move to total priority sector target of 40 percent on par with other banks by 2019-20, and the sub-targets for these banks, if to be made applicable post 2020, would be decided in due course,” it added.
- Bank loans to food and agro processing units will form part of agriculture. Export credit up to 32 per cent will be eligible as part of priority sector for foreign banks with less than 20 branches.
- The loan limits for housing loans and MFI loans qualifying under priority sector have been revised.
- RBI said the priority sector non-achievement would be assessed on a quarterly average basis at the end of the respective year from 2016-17 onwards, instead of annual basis as at present.

### Categories under priority sector

1. Agriculture
2. Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises
3. Export Credit
4. Education
5. Housing
6. Social Infrastructure
7. Renewable Energy
8. Others

### Targets

Categories	Domestic scheduled commercial banks and Foreign banks with 20 branches and above	Foreign banks with less than 20 branches
<b>Total Priority Sector</b>	40 percent of Adjusted Net Bank Credit	40 percent of Adjusted Net Bank Credit
<b>Agriculture</b>	18 percent of ANBC,  a target of 8 percent of ANBC is prescribed for Small and Marginal Farmers, to be achieved in a phased manner i.e., <b>7 per cent by March 2016 and 8 per cent by March 2017.</b>	Not applicable
<b>Micro Enterprises</b>	7.5 percent of ANBC to be achieved in a phased manner i.e. <b>7 per cent by March 2016 and 7.5</b>	Not Applicable



	<b>per cent by March 2017.</b>	
<b>Advances to Weaker Sections</b>	10 percent of ANBC or Credit Equivalent	Not Applicable

## 8. RBI: Directive on lending

- Reserve Bank of India directed banks to ensure that their overall direct lending to farmers should not fall below the average of last three years. The direction was given by RBI against the backdrop of government expressing concern over adverse impact of any reduction in direct credit, given the adverse weather conditions.
  - Further, the RBI warned the banks that direct lending below the target set for priority sector lending will attract usual penalties.
  - RBI also said that banks should also continue to maintain efforts to reach the level of 13.5 percent direct lending to beneficiaries who earlier constituted the direct agriculture sector.
9. The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) issued the final guidelines for the 6-year and 13-year cash settled. Interest Rate Futures (IRF) on government securities with residual maturity of 4-8 years and 11-15 years respectively under the Interest Rate Futures.
  10. RBI approves the merger of Kotak Mahindra-ING Vysya.
  11. Reserve Bank of Indian has allowed non-resident Indians (NRIs) to invest in chit fund to encourage flow of capital into the country.
  12. The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has extended the date to exchange pre-2005 bank notes till December 31, 2015 for third time.
  13. The RBI put in place a new framework to check loan fraud including by way of early warning signals at banks and red flagging of accounts, while swindlers will have no access to further banking finance.
  14. The Centre's new appointment norms for public sector bank chiefs — capping the age at 55 years and mandatory three-year board level experience — has come under judicial scrutiny with the Supreme Court.
  15. The Reserve Bank of India on Tuesday issued draft guidelines for companies that are eligible for raising funds under external commercial borrowing (ECB) route.
  16. Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has decided to permit non-resident Indians (NRIs) to subscribe to the chit funds without limit on a non-repatriation basis.
  17. Reserve Bank of India extended the deadline for exchanging pre-2005 currency notes of various denominations, including of Rs 500 and Rs 1,000, by six months till December 31, 2015.
  18. Lending rate for the NBFC-MFIs the quarter beginning July 01, 2015 is fixed at 9.89 %. The Reserve Bank had said that the average of the base rates of the five largest commercial banks shall be advised by the Bank on the last working day of every quarter, for the purpose of arriving at the interest rates to be charged by an NBFC-MFI to its borrowers in the ensuing quarter.
  19. The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) released the final guidelines on **Prepaid Payment Instruments for Mass Transit System (PPI-MTS)**. The issued guidelines enable the issuance of a separate category of semi-closed prepaid payment instruments for mass transit systems. The PPI-MTS can be used within the mass transit systems and will have a minimum validity of six months from date of issue. Such PPIs will be reloadable instruments subject to an outstanding limit of 2000 rupees at any point of time.
  20. Reserve Bank of India (RBI) on 16 July 2015 permitted Cooperative Banks with Core Banking Solution (CBS) to issue **ATM cards/ATM-cum-debit cards** in tie with a sponsor bank.
  21. The Reserve Bank of India signed a **Special Currency Swap Agreement** with the Central Bank of Sri Lanka. Under the arrangement, the Central Bank of Sri Lanka can draw up to **1.1 billion US dollar** for a maximum

period of six months. This special arrangement is in addition to the existing Framework on Currency Swap Arrangement for the SAARC Member Countries.

22. The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) allowed non-banking finance companies (NBFCs) to treat some project loans as **standard** even if the said projects are delayed and provided the revised date of commencement of commercial operations (DCCO) of the project fall within two years. RBI had first allowed the NBFCs to restructure infrastructure loans in January this year, giving them the facility so far restricted to banks.
23. The Reserve Bank of India on 30 July 2015 decided to put into circulation 10 rupees coins to commemorate the International Day of Yoga. The coins have been minted by the Government of India.
24. It has been decided to withdraw the prescription of offering additional interest of 1.28 per cent per annum on the deposits of AGID, NGIF and AFGIS.
25. The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) has allowed the banks to shift, merge or close all branches **except rural branches and sole semi-urban branches at their own discretion**. The central bank said the banks should, however, ensure that customers of the branch, which is being shifted/merged/closed, are informed **well in time** before actual shifting/merger/closure of the branch, so as to avoid inconvenience to them. **Shifting, merger or closure of any rural branch as well as a sole semi urban branch** would require approval of the **District Consultative Committee or District Level Review Committee**.
26. The Reserve Bank on Thursday asked all banks to provide interest concession of **two per cent** on short term crop loans of up to **Rs 3 lakh** to farmers. Interest subvention of two per cent per annum will be made available to the public sector banks and the private sector banks on their own funds used for short-term crop loans up to Rs 3 lakh per farmer provided the lending institutions make available short term credit at the ground level at **7 per cent per annum to the farmers**.
27. Reserve Bank of India (RBI) suspends licence of seven non-banking finance companies (NBFCs). The seven NBFCs whose licences were suspended are – Religare Finance, Artisans Micro Finance, Eden Trade & Commerce, RCS Parivar Finance, Nott Investments, Dewra Stocks & Securities, Swetasree Finance.
28. Reserve Bank inked an agreement with Nepal Rastra Bank on exchange of supervisory information. The Reserve Bank of India signed the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) on 'Supervisory Cooperation and Exchange of Supervisory Information' with the Nepal Rastra Bank(NRB). The Reserve Bank has so far entered into Memorandum of Understanding with supervisors of 27 countries and Letter for Supervisory Co-operation and Statement of Co-operation with supervisors of one country each to promote greater co-operation and share supervisory information.
29. The Reserve Bank of India puts into circulation Rs 5 coins to commemorate golden jubilee of Indo-Pak War 1965.

## BANKING

### IIP, CPI, WPI and Core sector Growth, Trade deficit and GDP growth

#### A. CPI (Consumer price inflation)

- **Consumer price inflation (CPI) in India, as represented by Consumer Price Index (CPI), rose higher to 4.41% in September 2015 from 3.74% recorded in the previous month.**
- **Consumer Food Price Index** stood at 3.88% in September 2015, up 1.68 percentage points from 2.20% in August 2015. According to the market polls, analysts had expected CPI to be at 4.49%.
- Pace of price increase was higher in rural areas than urban areas. CPI for rural areas stood at 5.05%, while CPI for urban areas was at 3.61% in September.
- Food and beverages price inflation stood at 4.29%, while prices of pan, tobacco and intoxicants went up 9.35%.
- Clothing and footwear price inflation has recorded a rise of 6% in prices. Fuel and light inflation has seen increase of 5.42%.

#### B. IIP (Index of Industrial Production)

- Index of Industrial Production (IIP) rose **6.4%**, a three-year high, compared with **4.1% in the previous month.**
- The Index of Industrial Production (IIP) is an index for India which details out the growth of various sectors in an economy such as mining, electricity and manufacturing.
- The all India IIP is a composite indicator that measures the short-term changes in the volume of production of a basket of industrial products during a given period with respect to that in a chosen base period.
- It is compiled and published monthly by the Central Statistical Organisation (CSO) six weeks after the reference month ends.

#### C. WPI ( Wholesale Price Index)

- The wholesale price index based inflation edged up marginally to -4.54 per cent in September 2015, partially higher than -4.95 per cent in August.
- (Base: 2004-05=100) for WPI
- WPI inflation continued to be in the negative territory for the 11th straight month with the Finance Ministry remaining concerned over deflationary trends in the economy

#### D. Core sector registers 2.6% growth

- The index of eight core industries registered a **growth of 2.6 per cent in August 2015 compared to its levels in August 2014. This is significantly higher than the 1.1 per cent registered in July.**
- **This index is a measure of the economic health of the manufacturing sector.**
- It consists of **8 sectors.**

#### E. Trade deficit

- India's exports of goods shrank by nearly a quarter in September from a year ago, falling for a **10th straight month. Exports stood at \$21.84 billion**

- Imports fell 25.42 per cent in September from a year earlier to **\$32.32 billion**.
- Trade deficit narrowed to **\$10.48 billion** last month from \$12.5 billion in August as gold and oil imports declined.
- For April-September, the trade deficit shrank to \$85.36 billion from 497.17 billion a year earlier, the data showed.

#### F. April- June quarter GDP Growth

- Gross domestic product (GDP) grew **7%** during April-June slower than the previous quarter's 7.5% expansion amid worrying symptoms of weak investment and consumer spending.
  - The **Gross Value Added (GVA)**, a new concept introduced by CSO to measure the economic activity, also slipped during the first quarter to 7.1 percent, from 7.4 percent a year ago.
  - India's current account deficit (CAD)** narrowed to **\$6.2 billion (1.2 per cent of GDP) in April-June, 2015-16**, from \$7.8 billion (1.6 per cent of GDP) a year ago.
  - CAD: A measurement of a country's trade in which the value of goods and services it imports exceeds the value of goods and services it exports.
  - The current account also includes net income, such as interest and dividends, as well as transfers, such as foreign aid, though these components tend to make up a smaller percentage of the current account than exports and imports.
  - The current account is a calculation of a **country's foreign transactions**
  - Along with **capital account** is a component of a **country's balance of payment**.
- ICICI Lombard General Insurance has tied up with Catholic Syrian Bank( CSB) for sale of its products through 431 branches of the bank.
  - SBI Card Launches SimplyCLICK- SBI Card, one of India's leading credit card issuers, announced a strategic partnership with 7 of India's biggest e-commerce players for its newest offering, the *SimplyCLICK SBI Card*. The collaboration is with the leading players in the e-commerce industry - Amazon India, BookMyShow, Cleartrip, FabFurnish, Food Panda, LensKart and Ola Cabs - all front runners in their respective categories. It is the country's 1<sup>st</sup> ever credit card that focuses on online shopping across diverse categories.
  - FedBook Selfie from Federal Bank, it is a unique bank account opening app as an upgrade to FedBook, its e-passbook app, which was a trendsetter at the time of its launch two years ago.
  - Bank of Maharashtra has launched Mudra card to meet the credit requirements of micro and small entrepreneurs. Issued as a Rupay debit card, the Mudra card is a flexible credit product that meets the working capital needs of micro and small entrepreneurs as cash can be withdrawn from any ATM or merchandise purchased using POS machine.
  - ICICI Bank Launches mVisa Electronic Cardless Transactions for Pockets App** The service is based on 'mVisa', a new mobile payment solution from Visa. ICICI Bank, India's largest private bank, is the first bank globally to launch a mobile app based on 'mVisa' solution for consumers and merchants.
  - SBI Life Insurance introduced 'Connect Life', a tablet-based service Distribution partners from all the sales channels of SBI Life can sell insurance products through this facility.
  - White label operator, Tata Communications Payment Solutions, partnered with FINO PayTech, a payment technology provider, to set up more ATM services in rural unbanked regions. The Indicash network has rolled out over 5,000 ATMs in 20 states in nearly two years, while FINO has a retail presence across 14 states with over 300 FINO Money Marts in the country.
  - HDFC Bank launched Pay Zapp, a complete digital payment and purchase solution, a one-stop online portal offering customers 'great deals at one place'.



15. Global payment service provider Western Union tied up with mid-sized private lender Yes Bank for international direct-to-bank transfers.
16. Kolkata-headquartered Bandhan Financial Services Ltd got the final nod from the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) to set up a universal bank. The bank is planned for launch in Kolkata on August 23, 2015.
17. RuPay, India's own payment system floated by the National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI), is set to roll out RuPay Credit Cards in 2016.
18. Country's second-largest private sector lender, HDFC Bank launched a 10-second paperless instant loan plan for its existing customers.
19. Country's largest lender State Bank of India said it has launched SBI eforex, an Internet-based platform that enables customers to book their foreign exchange transactions online.
20. India will adopt from July 22 a new method to set the overnight interest rate benchmark that will be based on traded levels instead of contributions from market participants. The new method will replace the current Mumbai Inter-Bank Offer Rate (MIBOR), and will be administered by the board of Financial Benchmarks India Pvt. Ltd. (FBIL).
21. Federal Bank has updated its mobile banking app, FedMobile. The new version, the bank says, is simpler, faster and friendlier to use.
22. ICICI Bank, India's largest private sector bank announced its association with Alibaba.com for the launch of the Trade Facilitation Center, a single window facility to provide easier trade finance to the small and medium enterprises in India.
23. Start-ups will now be able to access the mainstream capital market with SEBI giving its approval to set up a new platform. The new platform, called institutional trading platform (ITP), is for companies which are intensive technology users. At least 25 per cent of the pre-issue capital of such companies has to be held by qualified institutional buyers.
24. HDFC Bank will provide trade finance transactions on the mobile phone for wholesale banking clients.
25. Axis Bank, India's third largest private sector bank launched Secure+ debit card with security features that allow customers to modify limits and switch off card usage when not required. An EMV (Europay MasterCard Visa) chip based debit card, Secure + safeguards customer's wallet by blocking Axis Bank cards as well as other bank cards held by the customers in her/his wallet with a single phone call.
26. HDFC Bank launched '30-min auto' and '15-min 2-wheeler' loan schemes, for which customers have to provide only their biometric details.
27. SBI partners with MakeMyTrip for travel biz.
28. Bharti AXA General Insurance launched Smart Traveller.
29. Dena Bank on 6 April 2015 signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with Life Insurance Corporation (LIC) of India to provide insurance cover to all Aadhaar-linked savings account holders of the bank in the age group of 18 to 50 years.
30. PM Narendra Modi launched the Rs 20,000 cr Micro Units Development Refinance Agency (MUDRA) Bank and said, —the aim of the bank is to fund the unfunded small entrepreneurs and to strengthen savings habit in the country.
31. IndusInd Bank entered into an agreement to acquire Royal Bank of Scotland's Diamond & Jewellery Financing business in India and related deposit portfolio.
32. ICICI Bank in collaboration with Tech Mahindra launched a payment service 'Tap-n-Pay' based on the near-field communications (NFC) technology, enabling customers make over-the-counter payments without using cash.
33. Bharatiya Mahila Bank Ltd has entered into MoUs with New India Assurance Company Ltd and Life Insurance Corporation of India to provide insurance cover to its account holders.
34. Bank of India has partnered with insurance companies New India Assurance Co and Star Union Dai-ichi Life Insurance to roll out the government's social security insurance schemes.





35. Bank of Baroda, a leading Indian public sector bank, has tied up with UAE Exchange to offer an instant cash transfer facility to NRI customers.
36. Bharatiya Mahila Bank (BMB) has won The Asian Banker Achievement Award 2015.
37. The government has raised the limit of foreign direct investment in pension sector to 49 per cent in line with the FDI cap in the insurance sector.
38. Corporation Bank and New India Assurance Company Ltd signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) for implementing Pradhan Mantri Suraksha Bima Yojana [PMSBY], central government's scheme to provide security against personal accidental risk and permanent or partial disability.
39. Private insurer Bajaj Allianz has launched a weather-based crop insurance scheme for orange crops in Nagpur, Hingoli and Washim districts of Maharashtra.
40. Export-Import (Exim) Bank has extended a line of credit of \$268.35 million to Tanzania for financing extension of Lake Victoria pipeline.
41. India Brand Equity Foundation (IBEF) in the third week of June 2015 released a report on Intellectual Property Rights (IPRs) filing in India during 2013-14. While Maharashtra topped the list of states and Union Territories (UTs), Bengaluru was the top city in IPR filing.
42. Odisha State Co-op Bank launches Bank on Wheels.
43. Bank of India has partnered with insurance companies New India Assurance Co and Star Union Dai-ichi Life Insurance to roll out the government's social security insurance schemes.
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48. Insurance Australia Group (IAG) has decided to increase its stake in State Bank of India's general insurance arm to 49 per cent from 26 per cent.
49. IndusInd Bank has agreed to buy Royal Bank of Scotland's diamond and jewellery financing business in India.
50. . Canara Bank has entered into a memorandum of understanding with Life Insurance Corporation of India for offering the Pradhan Mantri Jeevan Jyoti Bima Yojana insurance cover to all its eligible customers.
51. An extremely simplified income tax return form will soon replace the controversial 14-page ITR that sought information like all bank accounts and foreign trip details. As it stands, the new ITR forms, including the ITR-1 and ITR-2, require an assessee to furnish the number of bank accounts held by the individual.
52. Axis Bank, the country's third largest private sector bank now facilitates instant transfer of money on various social media channels like Whatsapp, Facebook, Twitter, Email list and phone contact list.
53. Top private sector lender ICICI Bank opened its first branch in China, which was inaugurated by Prime Minister Narendra Modi.
54. HDFC Bank has launched 'HDFC Bank Apollo Medical Benefits Card'.
55. As part of Make in India, Finance Minister Arun Jaitley inaugurates Indigenous New Bank Note printing lines at Security Paper Mill in Hoshangabad.
56. ICICI Launches Voice Password Facility for Phone Banking.
57. State Bank of India today launched an initiative to provide doorstep services and expedite home loan application process. The initiative known as '**Project Tatkal**' will help get the loan within 10 days after receipt of application form and relevant supporting documents, the bank said in a release



58. HDFC Bank has become the first bank in India to launch Watch Banking for Apple Watch. It aims to provide banking services through all wearable devices across platforms like iOS and Android
59. **The MUDRA (Micro Units Development and Refinance Agency) card** under the Pradhan Mantri MUDRA Yojana (PMMY) scheme was launched by the Corporation Bank recently. The card facilitates the withdrawal and use of the working capital finance by micro entrepreneurs. Corporation Bank is the first bank to launch the MUDRA Card based on the RuPay platform.
60. **Pradhan Mantri MUDRA Yojana (PMMY) scheme:**
  - a. The MUDRA scheme is aimed at “funding the unfunded”. The scheme, which has a corpus of Rs 20,000 crore, can lend between Rs 50,000 and Rs 10 lakh to small entrepreneurs.
  - b. MUDRA will be set up through a statutory enactment.
  - c. It will be responsible for developing and refinancing all micro-finance institutions (MFIs) which are in the business of lending to micro and small business entities engaged in manufacturing, trading and service activities.
61. **Sriram Kalyanaraman** was on 8 July 2015 appointed as Managing Director (MD) and Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of National Housing Bank (NHB) for a period of Five Years. With this, Kalyanaraman became the first person from the Private Sector to head a Public Sector Financial Institution.
62. Deepak Mohanty Panel: Financial Inclusion
63. The Reserve Bank of India has set up a **14-member committee for working out a medium-term (five-year) measurable action plan for financial inclusion.**
64. Financial inclusion is the process of ensuring access to appropriate financial products and services needed by all sections of the society in general, and vulnerable groups such as weaker sections and low-income groups in particular, at an affordable cost in a fair and transparent manner by mainstream institutional players.
65. The committee headed by **Deepak Mohanty, Executive Director of RBI** will review the existing policy of financial inclusion, including supportive payment system and customer protection framework.
66. The committee will suggest a monitorable medium-term action plan in terms of its various components, such as payments, deposits, credit, social security transfers, pension and insurance.
67. **Members of the committee include:** Ashok Gulati, Infosys Chair Professor for Agriculture, Indian Council for Research on International Economic Relations; AP Hota, MD and CEO, National Payments Corporation of India; Paresh Sukthankar, Deputy Managing Director, HDFC Bank; Kishor P Kharat, Executive Director, Union Bank of India.
68. The Government is pushing financial inclusion **through four schemes – Pradhan Mantri Jan Dhan Yojana (PMJDY), Pradhan Mantri Jeevan Jyoti Bima Yojana (PMJJBY), Pradhan Mantri Suraksha Bima Yojana (PMSBY) and Atal Pension Yojana (APY).**
69. IDBI Bank has signed an agreement with Mudra Bank for refinancing of loans given to small enterprises. Bank of Maharashtra had also signed an agreement with Mudra Bank for refinancing of loans given to new entrepreneurs and small businesses.
70. Kotak Mahindra Bank (KMB) launched a mobile banking app ‘**Kotak Bharat**’ aiming to provide mobile banking services to customers in the remotest regions of India.
71. Following the notification of a new investment pattern by the finance Ministry earlier this year that mandates up to 15 % investment in equities by pension and provident funds, EPFOs will invest in equities parking about 5 % of its new fund flows into CPSE-ETF ( Exchange Traded Fund) of the department of Disinvestment.
72. **France's biggest bank BNP Paribas** on Thursday acquired homegrown **brokerage firm Sharekhan** in an estimated **Rs 2,000 crore deal**, as it seeks to expand retail broking operations here.
73. Nikkei Japanese media group is going to buy the **Financial Times from Britain's Pearson** in a \$1.3 billion.
74. Department of Industrial Policy and Promotion (DIPP) has given nod to Asian Development Bank's (ADB) and Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) for their conceptual development plan (CDP) report on **Vizag Chennai Industrial Corridor (VCIC) and Chennai-Bengaluru Industrial Corridor (CBIC)** respectively.

75. Ashok Kumar Lahiri, former Chief Economic Adviser to the Union Government, was appointed as the Chairman of the bank. While, Chandra Shekhar Ghosh, Founder of Bandhan Financial Services Ltd, was appointed as the Managing Director and Chief Executive Officer of the bank. They both will be in the board of directors as well.
76. India's second largest IT services firm Infosys signed a multi-million euro deal with Deutsche Bank. As per this agreement, Infosys will provide services like application maintenance, package implementation and testing services across the Deutsche Bank Group.
77. BSNL launched a pre-paid card linked mobile wallet service which would allow its customers to transfer money, pay for services as well as withdraw cash of up to Rs. 1 lakh. The wallet service, **Speed Pay**, allows a customer to load money even if he does not have a bank account. The money loaded in the mobile wallet can be transferred to a bank account and even withdrawn at bank branches or BSNL outlets.
78. The Competition Commission of India imposed penalty of **671.05 crore rupees** upon **four Public Sector Insurance Companies**. The penalty was imposed for manipulating the bidding process initiated by **Government of Kerala** for selecting insurance service provider for **Rashtriya Swasthya Bima Yojna for the years 2010-11, 2011-12 and 2012-13**. The beneficiaries of the schemes were BPL and poor families. These companies are National Insurance, New India Assurance, Oriental Insurance and United India Insurance \
79. Inflation based on the **consumer price index (CPI)** fell sharply in July to its lowest in the current series, strengthening the case for an interest rate cut soon, while the **index of industrial production (IIP)** climbed to a four-month high, adding to the evidence that growth was gathering pace. The all-India general CPI inflation dipped to **3.8%** in July 2015 (**new base 2012=100**), which is lowest reading in last eight months against 3.3% in November 2014, from **5.4% in June 2015** and well below Reserve Bank of India's January 2016 target of 6 per cent. **Core consumer inflation**, a measure of demand closely watched by the central bank, also eased from near 5 per cent in June to around 4.5 per cent. India's annual industrial output growth measured by index of industrial production (IIP) grew at four month high of **3.8%** to 178.5 in the month of June, not only higher than the previous months' figure of 2.7%, but also way higher than expectation figure of around 2.5-3%. The cumulative growth for the period April-June 2015-16 over the corresponding period of the previous year stands at 3.2%.
  - a. **The manufacturing sector**, which constitutes over 75% of the index, witnessed splendid growth of 4.6% to 188.4 in June as compared to 187.5 in May, 2015.
  - b. **Mining sector** output witnessed a contraction of 0.3% to 121.7 in the reported month as compared to 128.8 in May, 2015.
  - c. **Electricity sector** output showed growth of 1.3% to 184.0 in the reported month against 195.00 in the previous month.
80. The Competition Commission of India (CCI) approved the proposed deal related to a Joint Venture Aegon Religare Life Insurance Company where **Religare Enterprises will now exit this joint venture**.
81. Non-resident Indians (NRIs) can invest in National Pension System (NPS) to get a social security cover. While RBI has communicated to PFRDA about NRIs being eligible to make such investments, the government will shortly come out with a clarification on Foreign Exchange Management Act (FEMA) guidelines to facilitate non-resident Indians to invest in National Pension System (NPS).
82. Union Government on 21 July 2015 extended Interest Subvention Scheme (ISS) to Public Sector Banks (PSBs), private sector commercial banks, rural regional banks (RRBs), cooperative banks and NABARD. It was extended to ensure availability of crop loans of up to 3 lakh rupees to farmers at 7 percent per annum.
83. Cabinet Committee on Economic Affairs (CCEA) has extended the deadline for implementation of Crime and Criminals Tracking network and Systems (CCTNS) project till March 2017.
84. 61st edition of the Fortune 500 . The list has been topped by retail giant Walmart and is followed by petroleum refining giants Exxon Mobil and Chevron at 2nd and 3rd place. Warren Buffet's Berkshire Hathaway comes at 4th place followed by Apple Inc at 5th place. **The list is topped by Indian Oil at 119th rank with revenues of**

**74 billion US dollars and is followed by Reliance Industries, Tata Motors, State Bank of India, Bharat Petroleum, Hindustan Petroleum, and Oil and Natural Gas Corporation (ONGC).**

85. Anil Ambani-led Reliance Group through its entity Reliance Unmanned Systems signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with Augur Overseas Operation of Singapore to manufacture Aerostats and Airships in India.
86. The **Computer Science Corporation (CSC)** and **Hindustan Computer Limited (HCL)** on 23 July 2015 signed an agreement to form a **Joint Venture company** to provide technology services and solutions to the banking industry.
87. Finance ministry announced four-year road map for infusing Rs 70,000 crore in state run banks.
  - a. As part of the plan, the government would infuse Rs 25,000 crore each into PSBs in the current and the next fiscal and then follow it up with Rs 10,000 crore each in 2017-18 and 2018-19.
  - b. While Finance Minister Arun Jaitley had in Budget for 2015-16 provided Rs 7,940 crore towards recapitalisation of public sector banks, he on Friday sought Parliament nod for another Rs 12,010 crore in the first supplementary demand for grants. Another Rs 5,000 crore will be provided in subsequent supplementary demand through the year totaling Rs 25,000 crore of capital infusion.

Year	Amount( crores)
2015-16	25000
2016-17	25000
2017-18	10000
2018-19	10000

88. HDFC Bank Ltd. launched 'Dhanchayat' an educational film to raise awareness on the dangers of borrowing money from unorganised sources. This film has been launched under the aegis of **Swachh Banking**, the Bank's CSR initiative for rural India.
89. HSBC India's chairman Naina Lal Kidwai announced to launch 'green bonds' in India for raising funds for investments in environmental projects. The total investment attracted by Green Bonds in last two years is 37 million dollars. **HSBC is the fourth largest issuer in the world.**
90. Bharti Airtel has acquired **YTS Solutions** a mobile payments solutions company for an undisclosed price. YTS Solutions will be integrated with the operations of **Airtel Money Services Ltd** a subsidiary of Airtel which operates under brand name '**Airtel Money**'.
91. SBI Life Insurance on 6 August 2015 launched **Smart Humsafar**, a unique plan which offers multiple benefits of savings and insurance cover for husband and wife under a single policy.
92. ICICI Bank announced a new home loan proposition, '**ICICI Bank Saral-Rural Housing Loan**', with a special interest rate. Applicants from rural areas including women borrowers as well as seekers from weaker sections can now avail home loans at the ICICI Bank Base Rate ("I-Base") which is currently at 9.70%.
93. Axis Bank, country's third largest private sector lender, has launched contactless debit, credit and multi-currency forex cards.
94. The Insurance Regulatory and Development Authority of India (IRDA) has allowed **banks to tie up with a maximum of nine insurers from three segments —life, non-life and standalone health insurers — as part of the new bancassurance guidelines.**
95. Government unveils Indradhanush Mission for PSBs: The seven elements include appointments, board of bureau, capitalisation, de-stressing, empowerment, framework of accountability and governance reforms. Banks board of bureau will replace existing appointments board. Its members would be appointed in the next six months to be headed by the RBI governor. Banks board bureau would also hold bad assets of public sector

banks. Under recapitalisation plans for Public Sector Banks, 13 banks would get Rs 20,058 crore this financial year. The rest Rs 5,000 crore would be allocated based on efficiency criteria.

96. The government announced appointments of Managing Directors and Chief Executive Officers (CEOs) for five more banks besides declaring the names of non-executive Chairmen in five banks. However, these appointments are subject to the outcome of a writ petition filed in the Supreme Court, the government said. In a departure from tradition, **at least four** of those appointed in the latest round have come from the private sector.

#### 97. MD and CEOs

Name of the Bank	Name	Age	Present Position
Bank of Baroda	P S Jayakumar	53 yrs	MD & CEO of VBHC Value Homes Pvt Ltd.
Bank of India	M.O. Rego	56 yrs	Deputy Managing Director, IDBI Bank
Canara Bank	Rakesh Sharma	57 yrs	MD & EO, The Laxmi Vilas Bank Ltd
IDBI Bank Ltd	Kishore Kharat Piraji	56 yrs	Executive Director, Union Bank of India
Punjab National Bank	Smt. Usha Ananthasubramanian	56 yrs	CMD, Bhartiya Mahila Bank

#### 98. Non- Executive Chairman

Name of the Bank	Name	Age	Present Position
Bank of Baroda,	Ravi Venkatesan	51 yrs	Independent Director, Infosys
Bank of India	G Padmananbhan	60 yrs	Retired ED of Reserve Bank of India
Canara Bank	T N Manoharan	59 yrs	Director, Tech Mahindra, Public Health Foundation
Vijaya Bank	G Narayanan	66 yrs	Retired ED, Indian Overseas Bank
Indian Bank	T C V Subramainian	66 yrs	Retired CMD, Exim Bank

99. ICICI Bank launched '**Smart Vault**', a first-of-its-kind locker facility by a bank in India with latest robotic technology. The 'Smart Vault' uses robotic technology to access the lockers from the safe vault and enables customers to conveniently access their lockers at any time of their preference, in the comfort of a secure lounge where the locker automatically comes up to the customer.

100. Mr. Jaitley launched State Bank of India's '**Buddy**' — a **Mobile Wallet**. The App will be available in 13 languages and for all customers irrespective of the bank the customer is banking with or the card customer is using



101. After unveiling a revamp plan, **Indradhanush**, for public sector banks, the Union Finance Ministry indicated that no more private sector professionals would be hired for senior management positions in these banks. The **Appointments Committee of the Cabinet** has approved the guidelines for the selection to the posts of managing director and chief executive officer in public sector banks other than the five large ones.

## NEWS (NATIONAL)

1. The Department of Posts has released a Commemorative postal stamp on father of Indian Constitution Dr. B.R. Ambedkar as part of his 125th Birth Anniversary celebrations. It was released jointly by the Union Minister Social Justice & Empowerment Thaawar Chand Gehlot and Union Minister for Communication & Information Technology Ravi Shankar Prasad.
2. India is going to chair Group of Twenty (G20) nations forum in year 2018 and New Delhi could be the host of the prestigious annual G20 summit.
  - This decision was taken by G20 forum earlier in September 2015 which was chaired by Turkey. Turkey will hand over the Chair for the next year **i.e. 2016 to China and in 2017 Germany is going to chair it.**
  - G- 20 was established in 1999 as a meeting of Finance Ministers and Central Bank Governors on member countries in the aftermath of the 1997 Asian financial crisis.
  - The forum brings together 20 nations that represent world's major advanced and emerging economies, representing around 85 per cent of global GDP.
  - Every year one nation holds the chair of G20 known as Presidency which rotates annually among its member groups. The presidency establishes a temporary secretariat for the duration till it holds the Chair.

**Members: Brazil, China, Russia, India, South Africa, Australia, Argentina, Canada, France, Indonesia, Germany, Italy, Mexico, Japan, Saudi Arabia, Turkey, South Korea, United Kingdom (UK), United States (US) and European Union (EU).**

3. The Centre notified the mid-day meals rules. **Mid Day Meal Rules, 2015**
  - a. Running quality tests and sticking to nutritional standards mandatory.
  - b. The State governments will be held accountable for non-delivery of service.
  - c. If a school fails to serve food to students for three consecutive school days or five days a month, the State government will have to pay a "food security allowance" as compensation.
  - d. Children in the six-14 age group, studying from classes I to VIII, will be provided hot cooked meal on all working days. It will be the mandate of the schools to provide hygienic facilities for cooking meals.
  - e. School management committees will monitor the implementation of the meal scheme, oversee the quality of the food served and ensure cleanliness of the cooking place.
  - f. The heads of schools have been empowered to utilise any available fund for the continuation of the scheme. The amount will be reimbursed to the school account.
4. The Union Environment Ministry submitted its Intended Nationally Determined Contributions (INDCs) to the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), committing **to cut the emissions intensity of GDP by 33-35 per cent by 2030 from 2005 levels.**

## SALIENT FEATURES

- g. The INDCs, which lay out the blueprint for tackling climate change, emphasised **eight key goals** — sustainable lifestyles, cleaner economic development, reducing emission intensity of GDP, increasing the share of non-fossil fuel based electricity, enhancing carbon sink, adaptation and mobilising finance, technology transfer and capacity building.
  - h. India has committed to **40 per cent of non-fossil fuel energy to be adopted by 2030.**
  - i. It has also set the target of generating 3 billion tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub> equivalent of carbon sinks in the form of forests.
  - j. The INDCs are the basis for negotiating the climate change agreement at the U.N. climate summit in Paris coming up in December.
4. India has emerged world's largest cotton producer in the season ending in September 30, 2015 by surpassing China. As per data released by the International Cotton Advisory Committee (ICAC) India has produced 6.51 million tonnes (mt) of the cotton against 6.48 mt registered by China in the cotton year 2014-15
  5. The **World Bank**-assisted '**National Watershed Management Project**' or '**Neeranchal**' received the approval for implementation by the Union Cabinet.
    - The project aims to fulfil the **watershed component** of the **Pradhan Mantri Krishi Sinchai Yojana (PMSKY)** to **reduce surface runoff of rainwater, increase groundwater levels and better water availability in rain-fed areas.**
    - The cost of the project is estimated at Rs. 2,142.30 crore of which the **Centre will be pitching in with Rs. 889 crore** while **Rs. 182 crore will be provided by the respective State Governments.**
    - **The remaining 50 per cent of the project cost will be financed by a World Bank loan.**
    - It will be implemented across **nine States - Andhra Pradesh, Telangana, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Gujarat, Odisha, Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand and Rajasthan.**
    - These States have been picked since irrigation coverage is quite poor and this project will help increase water levels to benefit farmers. Of these, Jharkhand has the lowest irrigation coverage at just 5.6 per cent.
  8. India will observe **26 November as Constitution Day (Samvidhan Divas)** to spread awareness of Indian Constitution and its architect Dr B R Ambedkar.
    - On 26 November 1949, Indian constitution was adopted by the 389 member Constituent Assembly (CA) and it came into force on 26 January, 1950.
    - It was announced by Prime Minister Narendra Modi after laying the foundation stone of Dr Ambedkar Memorial at Indu Mills Compound in the heart of Mumbai city.
    - The life and works of Dr. Ambedkar will be displayed at the memorial.
    - It will feature a 150 feet tall statue of Dr. Ambedkar and 140 feet high dome stupa. It will have a research centre, library and museum, auditorium, park, ponds and plaza. It will also have meditation centre which can accommodate 13,000 people at a time.
  5. The Ministry of Shipping along with the Directorate General of Lighthouses and Lightships (DGLL) on 13 October 2015 launched an ambitious programme to develop 78 lighthouses in the country as centres of tourism in the first phase under Public Private Partnership (PPP).



- **India has 189 lighthouses dotting its vast coast line of 7517 Km, including the Andaman and Nicobar Islands in the Bay of Bengal and Lakshadweep Islands in the Arabian Sea.** Steeped in rich maritime heritage, each lighthouse has its own story to tell to the wayfarers.
  - The government launched second phase of the ambitious immunisation programme focussing on 352 districts and assured the states of full support for achieving the targets.
6. Launching the second phase of 'Mission Indradhanush', Union Health Minister J P Nadda interacted with health ministers and department secretaries of states through video-conferencing to enquire about their preparedness, and said his Ministry aims to achieve full immunisation of more than 90 per cent children by 2020.
- 'Mission Indradhanush' aims at fully immunising more than 89 lakh children who are either unvaccinated or partially vaccinated and those who have not been covered during routine immunisation for various reasons.
  - **The Mission aims to immunise them against seven life-threatening but vaccine-preventable diseases -- diphtheria, whooping cough, tetanus, tuberculosis, polio, measles and hepatitis-B.**
  - In the second phase, 352 districts have been selected including 279 mid-priority districts, 33 from North-East states and 40 districts from the phase one, where large number of missed-out children were detected.
  - The second phase will commence from October 7 for a week. This will be followed by week-long intensified immunisation drives for three consecutive months starting from November 7 and December 7, 2015 and January 7, 2016.
  - The Health Ministry will seek to reach an estimated 45 lakh children who have never received vaccines or remain partially- immunised in the second phase.
  - WHO (World Health Organisation), UNICEF, Rotary International and others are donor partners for Mission Indradhanush.
  - The mission was launched in December 2015 on the occasion of National Good Governance Day. The first phase drive was started in April 2015 in 201 districts covering 45 lakh children and immunising 20 lakh children.
7. The Central Government launched its flagship Kisan—C(K)rop Insurance using Space technology And geoiNformatics — project on Monday to speed up payment of crop insurance claims to farmers and provide accurate assessment of crop damage.
- The scientific data collected by drones and collated with satellites imagery will be matched with traditional crop cutting experiments to arrive at a foolproof data.
  - Among the drone companies active in India are SkyMet, Amigo Optima, Precision Hawk, Quidich and Techbaaz.
  - At the same time, the Minister launched an Android mobile phone application to assess large-scale damage to crops from hail. Farmers with Android and smart phones will download the application which will allow them to immediately send photos of their crop damage to officials concerned for immediate relief. This will cut the red tape in reaching assistance to farmers, the Minister said.
  - Initially, “Kisan” will be tried out as a pilot study in identified districts in Haryana, Karnataka, Maharashtra and Madhya Pradesh. Studies will be done during the ongoing kharif season in rice crop in

Kurukshetra (Haryana), Shimoga (Karnataka), Seoni (Madhya Pradesh) and in cotton in Yavatmal (Maharashtra).

8. The Union Cabinet cleared proposals to set up three new All India Institutes of Medical Sciences (AIIMS) at Nagpur in Maharashtra, Manglagiri in Andhra Pradesh and Kalyani in West Bengal under the Pradhan Mantri Swasthya Suraksha Yojna (PMSSY) at a cost of Rs 4,949 crore.
9. National Mission for a Green India (GIM) falling under the Environment Ministry has approved annual plans for Kerala, Mizoram, Manipur and Jharkhand.
  - The National Executive Council (NEC), which met recently, approved the Perspective Plans (PP) and Annual Plan of Operations (APOs) of Mizoram, Manipur, Jharkhand and Kerala.
  - NEC approved the PP of all four states with a total financial outlay of Rs 90,202.68 lakh for a plan period of five to ten years along with APOs of Rs 11,195.32 lakh for this financial year.
  - The total forest and non-forest area taken up in the four states under GIM during the total plan period will be 1, 08,335 hectares, out of which 81,939 ha will be improving the density of existing forests and 16, 396 ha will be new areas.
  - The National Mission for Green India (GIM) is one of the eight Missions outlined under the National Action Plan on Climate Change (NAPCC).
  - It aims at protecting; restoring and enhancing India's diminishing forest cover and responding to climate change by a combination of adaptation and mitigation measures
10. Supreme Court has declared National Judicial Appointments Commission (NJAC) Act, 2014 and 99th Constitutional Amendment Act, 2014 unconstitutional and void.
  - Ruling in this regard was given by five-judge Constitutional Bench of SC headed by Justice J S Khehar on a petition were filed by Supreme Court Advocates on Record Association (SCAORA) and others.
  - SC bench held that Collegium system will remain operative which was established by its earlier ruling of 1993 for the appointment of judges to the higher judiciary.
  - The parliament had unanimously passed the **NJAC Act, 2014** and the **99th Constitutional Amendment Act**. Both acts were meant to replace the two-decade old collegium system of judges appointing judges in higher judiciary.
  - These Acts were passed in order to bring transparency in appointment of Judges and give executive
  - The Constitutional Amendment Act was then ratified by 20 State Assemblies and had received the Presidential assent on 31 December 2014 and became effective from April 2015.
  - The NJAC was supposed to have **6 members, three from Judiciary comprising Chief Justice of India (CJI) as its Chairperson and ex officio member, 2 other senior most judges of SC, Union Minister of Law and Justice (ex-officio) and 2 eminent persons.**
11. The Supreme Court extended the voluntary use of the card to the **Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA), all types of pensions schemes, employee provident fund and the Prime Minister Jan Dhan Yojana.**
12. The government flagged off the '**Science Express Climate Action Special**' train from Delhi, as part of its initiative to sensitize the masses, especially children and the youth, about the issue of climate change, in the run-up to the global climate summit in Paris slated for December.

- The Science Express is an innovative science exhibition mounted on a 16 coach AC train which has been custom-built for Department of Science & Technology (DST) by the Indian Railways (IR). This unique mobile exposition was initially launched on 30 October 2007 by DST, in collaboration with German Government and Max Planck Society and it travelled across India in 4 phases of 6-7 months duration each.
- In 2011, as a joint initiative of DST and then Ministry of Environment & Forests, Science Express was rolled out as 'Biodiversity Special' which showcased the myriad 'Biodiversity of India' and it traversed the length of breadth of India in 3 runs.
- It has thus become the largest, longest running and most visited mobile science exhibition and created several records in its wake, including six entries in the Limca Book of Records.
- **Science Express is now being redesigned on the theme 'Climate Change'.**
- It is planned to run it as 'Science Express–Climate Change Special (SECCS)'.
- It is a unique collaborative initiative of Department of Science & Technology and Ministry of Environment, Forests and Climate Change (MoEFCC), and Ministry of Railway, Government of India.

**13.** Telecom Regulatory Authority of Indian (TRAI) made it mandatory for mobile service providers (MSPs) to compensate consumers call drops with effect from 1 January 2016.

- Credit the account of the calling consumer by one rupee. However, such credit in the account of the calling consumer will be limited to three dropped calls in a day.
- Send a message through SMS/USSD to the calling consumer within four hours of the occurrence of call drop and details of the amount credited into his account.
- In case of post-paid consumers provide the detail of the credit in the next bill.
- The implementation of the mandate will be closely watched by the TRAI which will also keep a watch on the measures being initiated by service providers to minimise the problem of dropped calls.
- Call drop represents the service provider's inability to maintain a call once it has been correctly established, that is, calls dropped or interrupted prior to their normal completion by the user, the cause of the early termination being with the service provider's network.

**14.** To support victims of attack and reduce disparity in compensation amounts notified by different states or Union Territories (UTs), the Home Ministry has introduced a '**Central Victim Compensation Fund (CVCF)**' with an initial corpus of Rs 200 crore.

- The corpus fund will be sourced by a one-time budgetary grant from Nirbhaya Fund, which is meant for tackling crime or violence against women. The corpus fund will also be supplemented with the option of receiving contributions from the public.
- The fund has been created to support and supplement existing **Victim Compensation Schemes (VCS)** notified by states and UT administrations
- According to the home ministry, victims will be compensated on grounds of injuries, loss and death with respect to acid attack, rape, human trafficking, disabilities and burns affected on them.

**15.** Rajiv Mehrishi is the New Home Secretary and Ratan Watal is the new Finance Secretary in place of Rajiv Mehrishi.

16. Ministry of Urban Development has launched a Smart National Common Mobility Card (NCMC) model to enable seamless travel by different metros and other transportation systems across the country besides being used for shopping as well. After an extensive study of different models used globally, the committee has recommended the EMV Open Loop Card with stored value.
17. Union Government released 2000 crore rupees to Employee Pension Scheme, 1995 (EPS-95) as its contribution for the year 2015-16. This contribution is in addition to the Rs 250 crore contributed by the government as grant-in-aid in the Employees' Pension Scheme, 1995 for providing minimum pension of Rs 1,000 to pensioners under the scheme. It is in addition to the contribution made by employers covered under the Act. Employers contribute 8.33 per cent of the monthly wages of the scheme members. **Note:** Employee Pension Scheme (EPS)-95 came into effect on 16 November 1995 and the scheme was launched under the Employees' Provident Funds and Miscellaneous Provisions Act, 1952. It applies to the employees of all factories and other establishments to which the Employees' Provident Funds and Miscellaneous Provisions Act, 1952 applies.
18. The government will auction 69 idle oil and gas fields of state-owned ONGC and Oil India to private firms on a new revenue sharing model, which will give the bidders pricing and marketing freedom. The 69 small and marginal fields, which hold 89 million tonne of oil and gas resources worth Rs 70,000 crore at current rates, will be given to explorers offering the maximum revenue from hydrocarbon produced to the government.
19. The Minister of Railways Suresh Prabhakar Prabhu launched three IT initiatives developed by Centre for Railway Information Systems (CRIS), IT arm of Ministry of Railways. These initiatives are:
  - A. Paperless unreserved ticketing mobile application
  - B. Card Operated Ticket Vending Machine
  - C. PARICHAALAN, Real Time Decision Making In Freight Operations
20. ONGC Videsh Ltd (OVL), the foreign arm of state-owned petroleum explorer Oil and Natural Gas Corporation (ONGC) has signed a definitive agreement to acquire up to 15 per cent stake in CSJC Vankorneft, which owns Russia's second-largest oil and gas field, Vankor, in eastern Siberia.
21. Prime Minister Narendra Modi released two commemorative coins of Rs 125 and Rs 10 in the memory of former President Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan.
22. Defence Minister Manohar Parrikar announced the implementation of the long delayed One Rank One Pension (OROP) for ex-servicemen.
  1. The scheme will be effective from July 1, 2014 with arrears that will be paid in four half-yearly installments. Widows and war widows will get arrears in a single installment. The base year for calculating the pension has been fixed at 2013.
  2. The estimated cost to implement OROP would be Rs. 8,000 - 10,000 crore and the arrears alone would cost Rs. 10,000 - 12,000 crore.
  3. The veterans and the government had been involved in negotiations for months. The Prime Minister's Office stepped in last month after the strike escalated into a hunger-strike.
  4. But the veterans are not satisfied, The major issues are
    - They want the scheme to be effective from April, 1 2014 but the Govt want it from July 1, 2014.
    - They want the base for calculation should be maximum of the pension scale in 2013 and the Govt says it will be average of minimum and maximum pension scale in 2013.
    - They want it to be revised every one or two years but the Govt wants it to be revised every 5 years.
    - They want a five member team under Defence Minister to submit the report in one month.
    - They want it to be applicable for VRS but the govt says it will not apply to employees taking Voluntary retirement.
23. Terming Bodh Gaya as the "land of enlightenment", PM Modi said that his government would develop the site as the 'spiritual capital' for it to serve as a civilisational bond between India and the Buddhist world. Bodh Gaya is famous as it is the place where Gautama Buddha is said to have obtained Enlightenment under what



became known as the Bodhi Tree. **Mahabodhi Temple, located in Bodh Gaya, is a UNESCO World Heritage Site.**

- 24.** National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI), a central infrastructure for various retail payments in India, has announced the launch of nationwide e-payment literacy workshop on the occasion of **World Literacy Day on September 8**. NPCI has planned a series of new launches, including a co-branded RuPay debit card with MUDRA Bank, a credit card and tie-ups with international payments solutions network providers in the next one year.

A. National Payments Corporation of India (NPCI) was incorporated in December 2008 and the Certificate of Commencement of Business was issued in April 2009. It works as the central infrastructure for various retail payment systems, the NPCI is promoted by the Indian Banks' Association and 10 banks, including six public sector banks, two private banks and two foreign banks. Some of the products of NPCI

- A. National Financial Switch (NFS)
- B. Immediate Payment Service (IMPS)
- C. National Automated Clearing House
- D. Aadhaar Payments Bridge System (APBS)
- E. Cheque Truncation System (CTS)
- F. Aadhaar-enabled payment system (AEPS)
- G. RuPay – Domestic Card Scheme

- 25.** Information and Broadcasting Minister Arun Jaitley paid rich tributes to Mahatma Gandhi and said it was hard to imagine another person with his stature, vision and inspiration.

- 26.** The government has set a target of achieving 100% literacy in villages adopted under the Sansad Adarsh Gram Yojana by March 2016. **Sansad Adarsh Gram Yojana:** It is a village development project under which each Member of Parliament will take the responsibility of developing physical and institutional infrastructure in three villages by 2019. The goal is to develop three Adarsh Grams or model villages by March 2019, of which one would be achieved by 2016. Thereafter, five such Adarsh Grams (one per year) will be selected and developed by 2024.

- 27.** Govt clears two gold schemes

A. The Union Cabinet approved two schemes — the Sovereign Gold Bond Scheme and the Gold Monetisation Scheme — that could bring an estimated 20,000 tonnes of idle gold lying with Indian consumers into the economy and also reduce India's dependence on gold imports.

**Gold monetisation scheme**

- Individuals and institutions can open a gold savings account with a bank and deposit at least 30 grams of gold bullion or jewellery after certification from a hallmarking centre for short, medium or long term.
- Term: 1- 15 years
- Earn interest and get tax exemptions including exemption from wealth tax, capital gains tax and tax-free interest income.
- Redemption: It will be at the prevailing market value at the end of the tenure of deposit.
  - i. short term: in gold or cash
  - ii. medium: only cash
  - iii. long term: only cash
- WHY?
  - i. Government Fish out idle gold resources with households.
  - ii. Gold will be allowed to be sold to jewellers in order to boost domestic supply
  - iii. It will also help to mobilise RBI's gold reserves and also to use it for making coins.

B. Sovereign gold bond scheme

Individuals and institutions can purchase bonds in denominations of 5,10,50,100 grams of gold instead of physical gold assets and earn interest on it. Gold bonds which will be relatable to the weight of gold.

- Term: 5 to 7 years
- Cap of 500 grams that a person can purchase in a year.
- Department of revenue to provide tax exemptions in next Budget including indexation benefit on transfer of bonds and also exemption from long-term capital gains tax at redemption. The government plans to exempt capital gains made at the time of redemption of gold under the Gold Bond Scheme.
- Redemption: in rupee amount on maturity
- WHY?
  - i. Government can cut down on demand for gold and its imports.
  - ii. Will be used in lieu of government borrowing.

28. The Union Cabinet approved an additional dearness allowance (DA) of six per cent for central government employees from July 1, which has now been raised to 119 per cent of basic pay as compared to 113 per cent earlier. This hike will benefit 50 lakh government employees and 56 lakh pensioners.
29. The Union Cabinet also permitted 100 per cent FDI under the automatic route for white label ATM operations. This decision will ease and expedite foreign investment inflows in the activity and thus give a fillip to the government's effort to promote financial inclusion in the country, including the Pradhan Mantri Jan Dhan Yojna.
30. The Union Cabinet has given its approval to the National Offshore Wind Energy Policy.
31. With the introduction of the National Offshore Wind Energy Policy, the Government is attempting to replicate the success of the onshore wind power development in the offshore wind power development. India has achieved significant success in the onshore wind power development, with over 23 GW of wind energy capacity already installed and generating power.
32. The development would help the country in moving forward towards attaining energy security and achievement of the National Action Plan on Climate Change (NAPCC) targets.
33. To increase energy security and diversify supply reliance beyond coal, hydro, nuclear, and natural gas, India wants to expand its renewable power capacity to 175 GW by 2022, including 100 GW of solar, 60 GW of wind power, 10 GW of biomass, and 5 GW of small hydropower. The country's current installed renewable capacity stands at 34 GW.
34. The Narcotics Control Bureau organised the Sub-Regional Drug Focal Point Meeting and Drug Demand Reduction (DDR) Expert Group Consultation, South Asia under the Colombo Plan Drug Advisory Programme (CPDAP) from 9th to 11th September, 2015. The Union Home Minister Shri Rajnath Singh was the Chief Guest on this occasion.
35. The Tenth World Hindi Conference has begun in Bhopal, Madhya Pradesh with the theme of Hindi Jagat-Vistar and Sambhavnaye. The 3-day event is organised by the Ministry of External Affairs in cooperation with the Madhya Pradesh government in Bhopal, Madhya Pradesh. PM Modi inaugurated the 10th Vishwa Hindi Sammelan (World Hindi Conference) at Lal Parade ground.
36. First World Hindi Conference held from 10 to 12 January 1975 in Nagpur. Seewoosagur and was inaugurated on 10 January 1975 by then Prime Minister of India, Indira Gandhi.
37. **21st Law Commission of India:** The Cabinet approved the constitution of the 21st Law Commission of India, for a period of three years with effect from September 1.
  - B. The Commission will consist of a full-time chairperson and four full-time members (including a member-secretary) among others.



- C. It will undertake research in law and review existing laws to make the necessary reforms, and enact new legislations and it shall also undertake studies and research for bringing reforms in the justice delivery systems for elimination of delay in procedures, speedy disposal of cases, reduction in cost of litigation etc.
- D. The Law Commission of India is a non-statutory body constituted by the Government of India from time to time. The Commission was originally constituted in 1955 and is re-constituted every three years. The various Law Commissions have been able to make important contribution towards the progressive development and codification of laws of the country. Law Commissions have so far submitted 262 reports.
- E. The term of the 20th Law Commission headed by former Delhi High Court Chief Justice A P Shah ended on 31 March 2015.
38. The Government has launched a national web portal to promote a national apprenticeship scheme for graduates, diploma holders, 10+2 pass-outs, and vocational certificate holders. The multilingual portal ensures seamless connectivity with all stakeholders including students, establishments, and technical institutions across the country for transparent administration. Union HRD Minister Smriti Irani also released a logo and a slogan '**Sashakt Yuva, Samarth Bharat**' for the portal.
39. Gujarat has come out on top in the World Bank's first ever ranking of States on the ease of doing business in India.
40. The report, prepared on the request of the Modi government, gains importance by coming before the World Bank's annual Doing Business report, which ranks nations and is expected to be released next month.
41. Gujarat implemented 71.14 per cent of the reforms, according to the assessment. Andhra Pradesh came second with a score of 70.12 per cent, Jharkhand third at 63.09 per cent, Chhattisgarh fourth with 62.45 per cent and Madhya Pradesh fifth with 62 per cent.
42. The largest recipients of foreign investments, Maharashtra and Tamil Nadu, are ranked eighth and twelfth with less than 50 per cent scores.
43. The focus of the study is on eight key areas. Here is the list with the best states in each area.:
- The setting up of a business- Punjab
  - allotment of land and obtaining construction permit- Madhya Pradesh
  - complying with environment procedures- Gujarat
  - complying with labour regulations- Jharkhand
  - obtaining infrastructure-related utilities- Maharashtra
  - registering and complying with tax procedures- Karnataka
  - carrying out inspections- Jharkhand
  - enforcing contracts- Maharashtra
44. The government has decided to provide an additional 50 days of manual work under the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (MGNREGA) in the current financial year in those regions **where drought has been declared**. The MGNREGA otherwise provides 100 days of assured work to each rural family.
45. Prime Minister Narendra Modi approved the Shyama Prasad Mukherji Rurban Mission (SPMRM) with an outlay of Rs 5142.08 crore. In an ambitious bid to transform rural areas to economically, socially and physically sustainable spaces, the Union Cabinet chaired by The Mission aims at development of rural growth clusters which have latent potential for growth, in all States and UTs, which would trigger overall development in the region.
46. The mission aims to create 300 such Rurban growth clusters over the next 3 years, across the country. The funding for Rurban Clusters will be through various schemes of the Government converged into the cluster.
47. Godavari River was formally interlinked with the Krishna River at Ibrahimpatnam near Vijayawada in Andhra Pradesh. While the plan is to eventually divert water from the Polavaram dam, since the dam is still under construction and will take at least 4 to 5 years to be ready, the Chandrababu Naidu government decided to divert Godavari water from the Pattiseema Lift Irrigation Scheme. The stored water by interlinking rivers at Prakasam

Barrage in Vijayawada will be diverted to irrigate paddy crop on 7 lakh acres in the Krishna, West and East Godavari districts, which are often called the rice bowl of the country.

48. The Central Government announced the launch of the **Pradhan Mantri Khanij Kshetra Kalyan Yojana. (PMKKKY)**. This is a new programme meant to provide for the welfare of areas and people affected by mining related operations, using the funds generated by District Mineral Foundations (DMFs). The objective of PMKKKY scheme will be
  - to implement various developmental and welfare projects/programs in mining affected areas that complement the existing ongoing schemes/projects of State and Central Government
  - to minimize/mitigate the adverse impacts, during and after mining, on the environment, health and socio-economics of people in mining districts
  - to ensure long-term sustainable livelihoods for the affected people in mining areas.
49. Shri Arun Jaitley, Union Minister of Finance, Corporate Affairs and Ministry of Information & Broadcasting today launched the Headend In The Sky (HITS) digital platform initiative, under the brand name NXT DIGITAL promoted by Hinduja Group. The NXT DIGITAL Broadcast Centre is a state-of-the-art next-generation MPEG-4 facility that has been designed and purpose-built to provide a variety of services to the cable distribution fraternity and their customers all across India.
50. Prime Minister Narendra Modi launched here the Rs 45,000-crore Integrated Power Development Scheme (IPDS) which will strengthen distribution networks and ensure 24X7 power supply to all by 2022.
51. To start the scheme in Varanasi, PM laid foundation stone of two power substations and Union Government will provide 572 crore rupees to implement it.
52. The IPDS will cover works relating to strengthening sub-transmission and distribution system, including provisioning of solar panels, metering of distribution transformers/feeders/consumer in urban areas and IT enablement of distribution sector.
53. The Prime Minister also announced that two sub-stations will be set up in Varanasi to help improve power distribution infrastructure in the city.
54. Modi also appealed to the people of Varanasi to replace incandescent bulbs with energy efficient LED lamps saying this would bring revolution in the country.
55. **Metro Man' E Sreedharan** has been invited to the United Nations' High Level Advisory Group on Sustainable Transport (HLAG-ST). The service is for a period of three years and Sreedharan has accepted the offer. Under his leadership, Konkan Railway and the Delhi Metro projects were completed on time.
56. President Pranab Mukherjee on 18 September 2015 presented the **National Tourism Awards 2013-14 at a function held at Vigyan Bhavan in New Delhi**.
57. The National Tourism Awards are presented annually by Union Ministry of Tourism to various segments of the travel, tourism and hospitality industry. These awards are being given since the early 1990s.
58. The awards are awarded to State Governments, Union Territories, hotels, travel agents, tour operators and individuals in recognition of their performance in their respective fields.  
Winners
  - F. The state of Gujarat was awarded for the Best State/UT for Comprehensive Tourism Development
  - G. Heritage City Gwalior in Madhya Pradesh as the Best Heritage City
  - H. Municipal Council of Maheshwar (Distt.Khargone) in Madhya Pradesh for Best Civic Management of a Tourist Destination in B Category.
  - I. Gujarat has been awarded as the Best Film Promotion Friendly State/Union territory.
  - J. Department of Tourism of Kerala received the award for Most Innovative use of Information technology.
  - K. The Great backwaters of Kerala by Kerala Tourism has been awarded the Best Tourism Film.
59. The Department of Posts has released a Commemorative postal stamp on father of Indian Constitution Dr. B.R. Ambedkar as part of his 125th Birth Anniversary celebrations.0

60. Government think-tank NITI Aayog has constituted an expert group on land leasing, headed by former CACP chairman T Haque, besides extending the task force on agriculture development up to October, 2015. The 10 member committee will have representation from Andhra Pradesh, Uttarakhand, Punjab, Maharashtra, Assam, Rajasthan, Meghalaya and Joint Secretary H S Meena from the Department of Land Resources.
61. Chaitanya Tamhane's debut Marathi movie *Court*, a courtroom drama which won a National Film Award, was chosen as India's official entry for the Best Foreign Language Film category at the 88th Academy Awards. **The 88th Academy Awards ceremony will be held on 28 February, 2016.**
62. Government has decided to appoint NITI Aayog Vice-Chairman Arvind Panagariya as the sherpa for G-20 talks, replacing Railway Minister Suresh Prabhu. The next G20 Leaders' Summit is scheduled on November 15-16 at Antalya in Turkey.
63. Union Home Minister Shri Rajnath Singh released a graphic booklet depicting the valour and sacrifice of the CRPF personnel during the epic battle of Sardar Post, Rann of Kutch in the 1965 Indo-Pak War. The aim is to instill patriotism and nationalism in the young generation and also to let the people know about the gallantry and sacrifice of the unsung heroes of CRPF. The force also plans to raise funds through marketing of these booklets, which will be spent on the welfare of the families of martyrs.
64. Union Government has constituted an expert committee to examine various issues related to UPSC civil services examination to select IAS and IPS officers. The committee panel would be headed by the **former IAS officer from Chhattisgarh cadre B.S. Baswan** and shall consist of leading academicians, technocrats and senior bureaucrats.
65. The government confirmed that it had appointed four brand ambassadors for its Digital India campaign, which kick-started on July 1, after confusion over the matter.
- Satwat Jagwani, All India IIT-JEE —Advanced Topper -2015
  - Krati Tiwari, All India IIT-JEE—Advanced Girl Topper -2015
  - Ankit Fadia, Author & Ethical Hacker
  - Pranav Mistry, Samsung USA (Computer Scientist and author of 6th Sense)
66. The government launched its Green Highways (Plantation, Transplantation, Beautification & Maintenance) Policy 2015, the aim of which is to help the environment, help local communities, and generate employment by planting trees along all the highways in the country. The policy aims to provide employment to the local people.
- L. **FUND:** Under this policy, every year 1 per cent of the total cost of highway projects will go the Green Highways Fund. That works out to around Rs 1,000 crore every year.
- M. **AUDIT:** The Policy envisages a strict system of auditing whereby money will be released by the government to the empanelled agencies only if they have achieved a survival rate of 90 per cent the previous year.
- N. **MONITORING MECHANISM:** There will be a strong monitoring mechanism in place by using ISRO's Bhuvan and GAGAN satellite systems. Every planted tree will be counted and auditing will be done. The agencies performing well will receive annual awards.
67. Telecom service provider Uninor has rebranded itself as Telenor in India. The company also has changed its tag to 'Ab life full paisa vasool' from 'Sabse Sasta'. Norway-based Telenor entered India in 2009.
68. V Shanmuganathan, Meghalaya Governor, has been given an additional charge of Manipur after the demise of incumbent Syed Ahmed Khan. 64-year-old Shanmuganathan, who was an RSS worker before joining BJP in 2003, was appointed as Governor of Meghalaya in May this year.
69. President Pranab Mukherjee visited Sweden and Belarus, the first ever by any Indian head of State, during which a number of key agreements on sustainable development, scientific research were signed.
56. Min. of Women and Child Development and Department of Electronics and Information Technology launched a website (Khoyapaya.gov.in). Before this, India had another portal named 'Track child' that belongs to the Min of Home Affairs, but in that portal only police communicates with police.

- 57.** Union Food and Consumer Affairs Minister Ram Vilas Paswan launched a BIS App to register complaints against sub-standard quality of ISI marked products and Hallmark jewellery.
- 58.** Jaipur Metro, touted as one of the fastest built metro systems in the country, was thrown open to public today. Chief Minister Vasundhara Raje flagged off the inaugural train on 9.6 km long route from Mansarovar to Chandpole.
- 59.** Union Government has launched IAP HealthPhone programme. This programme is initiative of Indian Academy of Pediatrics (IAP) in partnership with Union Ministry of Women and Child Development (WCD), United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF). It is supported by Vodafone India. Bollywood Actor Aamir Khan is support partner and brand ambassador of this programme.
- 60.** Govt notifies FDI policy relaxations for NRIs Non-repatriable investments by NRIs, OCIs and PIOs will be treated as domestic investments and will not be subject to foreign direct investment caps. NRIs would also include Overseas Citizens of India (OCIs) and Persons of Indian origin (PIOs). The decision is expected to result in increased investments across sectors and greater inflow of foreign exchange remittances leading to higher economic growth.
- 61.** India and Bangladesh ratified a four-decade old land boundary agreement for the exchange of enclaves during Prime Minister Narendra Modi's official visit aimed at boosting connectivity and trade. The two countries also launched two trans-border bus services (Kolkata-Dhaka-Agartala route and Dhaka-shillong-Guwahati route) and concluded agreements on building power plants to produce 4,600MW of electricity to help Bangladesh overcome a crippling energy crisis.
- 62.** The country's 13th major port will come up at Dahanu near here on fully reclaimed land and the project envisaging an investment of up to Rs 6,000 crore is likely to be completed over the next three years. In a first, the Centre has tied up with the state government by making it an equity partner to ensure the port gets completed fast. The port, which will have a capacity to handle 60-100 million tonne of cargo per annum, will be built completely on the reclaimed land spread over 2,500 acres. Maharashtra has a 720km coastline but has only two major ports – JNPT and Mumbai Port. Besides, there are private ports in the State at Dharamtar, Dighi and Jaigad.
- 63.** India's first of its kind Tier-I Oil Spill Response Centre (OSRC) for Mumbai Port Trust (MBT), Jawaharlal Nehru Port Trust (JNPT) and ONGC's facilities at Nhava and Uran was inaugurated on 5 June 2015. It was inaugurated by Union Minister of Road Transport & Highways and Shipping, Nitin Gadkari to tackle pollution and oil spills in and around Mumbai.
- 64.** India has jumped six places to 141st position in the latest rankings released by world football's governing body FIFA. India was previously placed 147th in the rankings list. Iran (41) is the top-ranked Asian team in the list, followed by Japan (52) and South Korea (58).
- 65.** Anil Ambani-led Reliance Power today signed an agreement to invest \$3 billion in setting up a mega power plant and a floating LNG import terminal in Bangladesh which faces acute power shortages. This will be the largest foreign investment in Bangladesh
- 66.** Amitav Ghosh unveiled Flood of Fire, the final instalment in his Ibis trilogy, which traces the history of the First Opium War (1839-42) with China and is set in 19th century Bengal, The first book in the Ibis trilogy, Sea of Poppies, was shortlisted for the 2008 Man Booker Prize.
- 67.** CCEA okays Rs 6,000-cr interest-free loan to sugar mills The government today approved Rs 6,000-crore interest-free loan to sugar mills to help them partly clear cane price arrears to farmers that have touched about Rs 21,000 crore. This is the second time that the Centre is providing interest-free loan to cash-starved mills. In December 2013, the UPA government had given interest-free loans of Rs 6,600 crore to make payments to cane farmers.
- 68.** RINL plans to diversify into energy sector RINL signed an MoU with Power Grid Corporation of India Ltd for setting up a transmission tower. As part of its expansion plans, Rashtriya Ispat Nigam Limited, the corporate entity of Visakhapatnam Steel Plant, has decided to diversify into various sectors to increase its presence across the country.
- 69.** Govt approves ₹4,721 cr highway projects in MP, Telangana The government today approved ₹4,720.92 crore highways projects in Madhya Pradesh and Telangana under its flagship highways building programme NHDP. This



work will be under the NHDP Phase-IV. The approval is on Engineering, Procurement and Construction (EPC) basis.

70. Cabinet nod to motor pact among 4 SAARC nations; seamless transit a reality soon The Cabinet approved the signing of a motor vehicles pact between India and three other nations of the SAARC grouping – Bhutan, Bangladesh and Nepal on June 15, which will enable seamless transit of passenger and cargo vehicles among these nations. The Cabinet has approved signing of the Bangladesh, Bhutan, India and Nepal (BBIN) Motor Vehicle Agreement for the Regulation of Passenger, Personal and Cargo Vehicular Traffic amongst BBIN. The agreement will be signed on 15th June at the BBIN Transport Minister's meeting in Thimpu, Bhutan.
71. The Cabinet decided to bring in an ordinance to amend the Negotiable Instruments Act, which provides for filing of cheque bounce cases in place where the cheque was issued, a move that will benefit 18 lakh people. Negotiable Instruments (Amendment) Act, 2015 was passed in the Lok Sabha in May seeking to overturn a Supreme Court 2014 ruling said the case has to be initiated where the cheque-issuing branch was located. The amendment passed by the Lok Sabha provides that cases of bouncing of cheques can be filed only in a court in whose jurisdiction the bank branch of the payee (person who receives the cheque) lies. If a complaint against a person issuing a cheque has been filed in the court with the appropriate jurisdiction, then all subsequent complaints against that person will be filed in the same court, irrespective of the relevant jurisdiction area.
72. 3 more districts enter National Capital Region fold The National Capital Region has undergone another expansion with three more districts – Mahendragarh and Bhiwani (both in Haryana) and Bharatpur (Rajasthan) This brings the number of districts in the NCR to 19, with the total area increasing by 34% to 45,887sq km.
73. **Recommendations of Bibek Debroy committee on restructuring of Indian Railways**

- Union government had constituted the high-level committee in September 2014 to restructure the Railways and suggest ways for resource mobilization.
- It was seven-member panel headed by eminent economist and NITI Aayog member Bibek Debroy.
- The other 6 members are former cabinet secretary K M Chandrasekhar, Gusharan Das, Ravi Narain, Partha Mukhopadhyay, Rajendra Kashyap, Ajay Tyagi and Ajay Narayan Jha.
- Bibek Debroy Committee on the restructuring of Indian Railways has submitted its final report to the Union Ministry of Railways.
- Committee's recommendations based on three pillars: commercial accounting, changes in HR and an independent regulator.
- Establishment of an independent regulator Railway Regulatory Authority of India (RRAI) with a separate budget and to be independent of the Ministry. RRAI will decide on tariffs to revamp the cash-strapped railways.
- No privatisation of Indian Railway but allowed participation of private sector in the railway projects.
- Separation of activities like running of hospitals, schools, real estate development, catering, manufacturing of locomotives, coaches and wagons from the core business of running trains.
- State governments should be asked to entirely fund the Government Railway Police (GRP).
- General Managers should have the freedom to choose between private security guards and RPF for security on trains.
- The recommended changes should be implemented only by Union Railways ministry in the first five years including the resolution of the social cost issue.
- Railway Budget should be phased out with gross budgetary support to Indian Railways

74. The government has launched an insurance pool to the tune of Rs. 1,500 crore which is mandatory under the Civil Liability for Nuclear Damage Act (CLND). Under the Rs. 1,500-crore pool, set up by General Insurance Corporation of India (GIC Re) and 11 other non-life insurers including New India, Oriental Insurance, National Insurance and United India Insurance from the public sector apart from private insurance companies, policies

offered will be a nuclear operators liability insurance policy and a nuclear suppliers' special contingency (against right to recourse) insurance policy.

75. India's current account deficit (CAD) widened to \$1.3 billion in January-March 2015 as against \$1.2 billion in the year-ago period. In percentage terms, however, CAD was steady at 0.2 per cent of GDP in the reporting period.
76. The trade deficit narrowed to \$10.4 billion in May from \$11 billion in April and \$11.2 billion in May 2014. Though the trade deficit has narrowed, exports and imports have contracted for the sixth month in a row in May. Exports stood at \$22.3 billion in May against \$27.99 billion in the year-ago period, reporting a 20.2 per cent fall in dollar terms.
77. Imports during May were at \$32.75 billion, down 16.5 per cent on the figures in the corresponding month last year. It was marginally lower than the \$33.05 billion in April 2015.
78. Oil import bill dips by 41 per cent. The oil import bill in May, at \$8.5 billion, was 41 per cent lower than what they were in the corresponding month in 2014.
79. However, gold imports increased 10.5 per cent over their May 2014 figures.
80. 23. The Union Government has cleared 16 foreign direct investment proposals worth Rs. 6,750.86 crore, including that of Beacon's unit Syngene, Torrent Pharma, Star India.
81. Govt raises solar power target 5-times to 1 lakh MW by 2022
82. CCEA gave nod for inclusion of Uttarakhand, Jharkhand and Chhattisgarh in the list of states to be covered under the National Dairy Plan- I (NDP-I). It also extended the implementation period upto 2018-19 in order to achieve key outputs of National Dairy Plan- I.
83. Bharat Sanchar Nigam Ltd (BSNL) will set up 40,000 Wi-Fi hotspots across the country over the next three years through the public-private-partnership mode. According to BSNL, the company will set up another 2,500 Wi-Fi hot spots at 250 locations at a cost of Rs 500 crore this year.
84. From being an average \$ 3 billion annual lender, ADB will move towards annual lending of \$ 4 billion to India in next few years. ADB aims at increasing its sovereign and non-sovereign lending from the present \$7-9 billion in three years from 2015-17 to \$10-12 billion between 2016 and 2018 using ADB's expanded lending capacity. In March this year, ADB had forecast India GDP growth at 7.8 per cent in 2015-16. It had projected China's growth at 7.2 per cent this calendar year. It will get updated in July when ADB releases its new report.
85. ISRO has said it will provide navigational support to the country's Railways through 'GAGAN' (GPS-aided geo-augmented navigation) system. GAGAN is an indigenous navigational guide system developed by ISRO on the lines of GPS system of the USA. GAGAN was jointly developed by the ISRO and Airports Authority of India (AAI) with a view to assist aircraft in accurate landing. The GAGAN signal is being broadcast through two Geostationary Earth Orbit (GEO) satellites - GSAT8 and GSAT10. With the use of GAGAN software system, a train would know the location of any unmanned level crossing and soon a warning signal can be given.
86. The Chinese Version of the sacred ancient Indian scripture Bhagavad Gita was launched in China during an international yoga conference. The book was released by Indian Ambassador to China Ashok K. Kantha. This is the first time; a well-known Hindu ancient religious text was published in China. It was translated in Chinese by Professor Wang Zhu Cheng and Ling Hai of Zhejiang University in Shanghai and was published by Sichuan People's Publications.
87. The government today launched a free SMS service called '**Nowcast**' to provide alerts on extreme weather conditions like hailstorm every three hours to over one crore registered farmers on their mobile phones. Besides, a web-portal on crop insurance was also unveiled to create awareness and encourage more farmers to insure their crops taking advantage of existing schemes. The web portal, however, has been launched in English. The free SMS alerts, to be sent in English, Hindi and regional languages as per farmers' request, will be issued to over one crore farmers whose mobile phones are already registered on the government's mKisan portal.
88. Prime Minister Narendra Modi led India in breaking the Guinness World Record (GWR) for the largest number of people doing yoga at one venue — the stately Rajpath which he called "Yogpath" — on a day when 192 countries celebrated the first International Day of Yoga on 21 June. *In all, 35,985 people powered India's record-setting*



*endeavour*. And, foreigners helped India clock a second record — that of the largest number of foreign nationals in a single yoga lesson with participation from 84 countries.

89. Railway Minister Suresh Prabhu on Sunday flagged off India's first diesel electric multiple unit (DEMU) train service with an air-conditioned coach in Kochi. The Angamaly-Ernakulam-Tripunithura-Piravom train service is expected to help in reducing traffic congestion in the state's fastest growing city.
90. China opened the second land crossing in Tibet via Nathu La to allow the first batch of Indian pilgrims undertaking the arduous Kailash-Manasarovar Yatra, in the latest confidence-building measure between the two neighbours.
91. Japanese telecom and internet giant SoftBank Corp. along with Sunil Mittal's Bharti Enterprise and Taiwan-based manufacturing major Foxconn Technology announced a joint venture, SBG Cleantech, to promote adoption of clean and safe energy in India. It is billed as one of the biggest foreign direct investment (FDI) projects in the sector. The JV will be led by SoftBank, while the other two will be minority partners.
92. PM launched **Smart Cities, Housing for All by 2022 and Atal Mission for Rejuvenation and Urban Transformation (AMRUT) schemes.**
  - The Cabinet had in April approved about 1 lakh crore investment on urban development under Smart Cities Mission and the Atal Mission for Rejuvenation and Urban Transformation of 500 cities (AMRUT) with outlays of Rs 48,000 crore and Rs 50,000 crore, respectively..
  - Under Housing for All, the Government aims to build 2 crore houses by 2022.
93. India has been ranked 70th among 145 countries in terms of its citizens thriving in three or more elements of well being – purpose, social, financial, community and physical. The report, titled 'Gallup – Healthways State of Global Well-Being: 2014', captures how people feel about and experience their daily lives. Latin American countries dominate in overall well-being, comprising seven of the top 10 countries in high well-being.
94. Solar Energy Corporation of India to be renamed as Renewable Energy Corporation of India (RECI). Its activities will embrace all branches of renewable energy, not just solar.
95. Govt okays setting up of 6 new IIMs. The new IIMs will be located at Visakhapatnam (Andhra Pradesh), Bodh Gaya (Bihar), Sirmour (Himachal Pradesh), Nagpur (Maharashtra), Sambalpur (Odisha) and Amritsar (Punjab). There are at present 13 IIMs in the country.
96. India's first Modernised Anganwadi Centre at Hasanpur village in Sonapat, Haryana was launched by Union Ministry of Women and Child Development on 24 June 2015. The centre has been set up as part of Nand-Ghar Yojana of Union Government which aims at transforming the anganwadi centres.
97. The Government has awarded a record 56 defence manufacturing permits to private sector entities underlining its determination to have indigenous defence production as a cornerstone of its 'Make in India' drive. The permits are the first step in the process to enable firms such as Mahindra, Tata and Pipavav to set up production units for major military equipment. A new defence procurement policy is expected over the next few weeks that will further clarify complex matters such as the offset policy, blacklisting process as well as a specific route for the Make in India process.
98. A ranking of destinations for attractiveness to foreign investors has placed India at the top among 110 countries. China has secured the 65th position and the U.S. is at the 50th. In the 2014 index, India was at the sixth position and Hong Kong was number one. The ranking is based on an index for baseline profitability that assumes that three factors affect the ultimate success of a foreign investment:
99. Two Indian organizations, India Army and Indian Railways are among the world's biggest employers. It was revealed in a research published by the World Economic Forum (WEF). Both organisations employ around 2.7 million people together. US department of Defense: It is the world's biggest employer with over 3.2 million employees. People's Liberation Army (PLA): Chinese military is 2nd biggest employer with 2.3 million employees.
100. Union Railway Minister Suresh Prabhu inaugurated the Integrated Security System (ISS) at 6 railway stations in Mumbai, Maharashtra. The system was inaugurated Chhatrapati Shivaji Terminus (CST), Dadar, Kurla and Lokmanya Tilak Terminus (LTT), Kalyan and Thane.

101. Sunil Mittal-led Bharti Airtel has become the world's third largest mobile operator with 303 million subscriber. Quoting latest data published by World Cellular Information Service (WCIS), it said Airtel has over 303 million mobile subscribers across its operations and has moved up one position in the global rankings.
102. A massive 7.9-magnitude earthquake struck east of Pokhara in Nepal, causing widespread damage to buildings in the capital Kathmandu.
103. Minister of State (MoS) for External Affairs V K Singh inaugurated first India-China Yoga College at Yunnan Minzu University in Kunming, China.
104. President Pranab Mukherjee, on his visit to Russia, has inaugurated a festival of Indian Culture 'Namaste Russia' in Moscow.
105. **PM Modi's visits- Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Uzbekistan, Tajikistan and Turkmenistan and Ufa - BRICS and SCO summits .**
106. **"DIGITAL INDIA" week**
  - Prime Minister Narendra Modi launched the "Digital India Week" as part of the larger initiative to empower the people and extend services better with the use of information technology and its tools.
  - The vision is centred on three key areas:
    - digital infrastructure as a utility to every citizen
    - Governance and service on Demand
    - Digital empowerment of Citizens
107. Nationwide **mobile number portability (MNP)**, which will allow customers to keep their existing mobile phone numbers while shifting between States and circles, will be operational from July 3.
108. The World Bank cleared a **\$650 million loan** for a huge Indian freight rail corridor( Eastern Dedicated Freight Corridor) that will span 1,840 kms (1,140 miles) across the northern heartland of the country.
109. Union Railway Minister Suresh Prabhu inaugurated the Integrated Security System (ISS) at 6 railway stations in Mumbai, Maharashtra.
110. India's GDP crossed the \$2-trillion mark in 2014, according to data released by the World Bank The World Bank data also show that India's gross national income per person rose to \$1,610 (around Rs. 1 lakh) a year during 2014 from \$1,560 the previous year.
111. A web portal for online submission of applications for environment clearance by State Environment Impact Assessment Authorities (SEIAA) for Category B projects was launched by Union Minister of State for Environment, Forest and Climate Change Prakash Javadekar in New Delhi on the occasion of Digital India Week.
112. Europe's Airbus Group and India's Mahindra Group have struck a deal to build helicopters jointly as they bid to win an expected wave of orders from the country's armed forces, the companies said in a statement on Friday.
113. **Highlights of the SECC 2011 for Rural India**
  - **Socio Economic and Caste census 2011 (SECC-2011)** was released on 3 July, 2015.
  - The key points of the census-
    - It's the first SECC in India since 1934.
    - 30 % of rural households are landless and derive a major part of their income from manual, casual labour.
    - In 75 % of 17.9 crore households in rural India, the monthly income of the highest-earning member is less than Rs.5,000
    - 25 % of the rural households still do not own a phone
    - 23.5 % of rural households had no adults above the age of 25 who are literate.
    - 25 % rural households have no access to irrigation
    - Only 8.29 % of rural households have a member earning over Rs.10,000 per month
    - 10.69 crore rural families, or 60 %, qualify for **"deprivation"**

- Of these over 100 million deprived households, 21.5 % belong to scheduled castes or tribes.

114. Tata Trust, a non-sectarian philanthropic organisation of Tata Group, has tied up with Google India to provide Internet facilities to rural women so that they can use it in their daily lives. The joint initiative called, Internet Saathi, will empower women and help bridge the technology gender divide in the country considering the fact that only 12 per cent of women in rural India know about or have access to Internet.
115. Bulk buyers of perishable commodities, such as fruits and vegetables, in New Delhi can sidestep middlemen while procuring fresh produce by the end of this month through the '**e-Kisan Mandi**' portal, an exchange platform to be operated by the Small Farmers Agribusiness Consortium (SFAC).
116. In a joint initiative between India Post and State Bank of India, point-of-sale (POS) machines will now start functioning at post offices in Andhra Pradesh and Telangana. The "**turant seva**" counters in post offices, soon to be introduced in the rest of the 2,400-odd post offices in both States.
117. The President of India, Shri Pranab Mukherjee inaugurated a 'Nakshatra Vatika' (July 06, 2015) at Rashtrapati Nilayam Gardens, Bolarum, Secunderabad.
118. Indian Army on 8 July 2015 dedicated the monument named Prerna Sthal at Hussainiwala to the nation. The commemorative monument was built to honour the sacrifice of soldiers of India.
119. The Union Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports on 8 July 2015 constituted an eight member committee to study status of Sports Authority of India (SAI) training centers across the country. The committee will be headed by former athlete Ashwini Nachappa and includes Pullela Gopi Chand as a member among others. It was formed against the backdrop of suicide attempt by four girl inmates at the Sports Authority of India (SAI) SAG Water Sports centre at Alappuzha, Kerala in May 2015 that resulted in death of one girl trainee.
120. Professor Lord Kamlesh Patel of Bradford OBE was on 8 July 2015 appointed as an independent member on the 14-member board of the England and Wales Cricket Board (ECB). With this, he became the first British Asian to join the ECB Management Board which is chaired by Colin Graves and the President of the Board is Giles Clarke CBE.
121. Union Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) in first week of July 2015 extended the '**disturbed area**' status of Nagaland for one more year. The '**disturbed status**' area became effective from 30 June 2015 and will be in effect until 30 June 2016.
122. Former President of India Dr. APJ Abdul Kalam on 9 July 2015 launched the **Rashtriya Avishkar Abhiyan (RAA)** in New Delhi. The abhiyan aims to inculcate a spirit of inquiry, creativity and love for Science and Mathematics in school children. Rashtriya Avishkar Abhiyan is a concept developed by the Ministry of Human Resource Development.
123. University Grants Commission (UGC) on 2 July 2015 accorded special Heritage Status on 19 Colleges across the country. These include St Xavier's College, Mumbai and Fergusson College, Pune among others.
124. **HRIDAY scheme, launched from Amritsar**
  - Union Ministry of Urban Development on 14 July 2015 launched the National **Heritage Development and Augmentation Yojana (HRIDAY)** for 12 cities in the country from Amritsar in Punjab.

### Features of HRIDAY

- It seeks to promote an integrated, inclusive and sustainable development of heritage sites, focusing on maintenance of monuments and on advancement of the entire ecosystem.
- In the initial phase of HRIDAY, **12 heritage cities** have been identified which will be rejuvenated and developed. Union Government will provide 500 crore rupees to these 12 cities.
- It will be **completely funded by the Union Government** to create infrastructure and provide facilities around the heritage sites to attract more tourists.

- 125.** Minister of Railways Suresh Prabhu on 14 July 2015 inaugurated the broad-gauge railway-line between **Gandhidham and Tuna-Tekra Port** in Gujarat by flagging off a goods train. The rail line is India's first railway-line built with private sector participation under **Non-Government Railway (NGR) Policy 2012** of Indian Railways.
- 126.** The Union Ministry of Women and Child Development on 14 July 2015 launched the #100Women Initiative in collaboration with Facebook to select 100 women achievers of India.
- 127. Modi launches 'Skill India' campaign**

- Prime Minister Narendra Modi pitched for making India a 'human resource capital' of the world like China has become a 'manufacturing factory' as he launched a number of schemes here to train 40 crore people in various skills by 2022 as part of "war against poverty."
- The ambitious schemes launched by him were National Skill Development Mission, the National Policy for Skill Development and Entrepreneurship 2015, Pradhan Mantri Kaushal Vikas Yojana and Skill Loan scheme on **World Youth Skill Day**.
- Under the Skill Loan scheme, credit ranging from Rs 5,000 to Rs. 1.5 lakh will be given to 34 lakh youth over five years.
- Pointing out that 65 per cent of the country's population is under the age of 35, Modi said the key priority is to create employment opportunities for the youth as well as create avenues to skill them in a structured manner to improve their employability.
- He emphasised the need to have futuristic vision noting that the world and technology are changing fast.

#### **World Youth Skills Day: 15-JUL-2015**

- The World Youth Skills Day was established by the United Nations (UN) General Assembly on 11 November 2014. The Assembly designated 15 July as the World Youth Skills Day in order to raise awareness about the importance of investing in youth skills development.

- 128.** Prime Minister Narendra Modi proposed a 10 point initiative named as 'Dus Kadam: 10 Steps for the Future' to boost cooperation within the members of the BRICS (Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa).
- BRICS Trade Fair (to be held during India's chairmanship in 2016)
  - BRICS Railway Research Centre
  - Cooperation among Supreme Audit Institutions
  - BRICS Digital Initiative
  - BRICS Agricultural Research Centre
  - BRICS state/Local Government's Forum
  - Cooperation among cities in field of Urbanisation
  - BRICS Sports Council and Annual BRICS Sports Meet
  - First Major Project of NDB to be in field of Clean Energy
  - BRICS Film Festival

#### **129. A K Bhargava committee report on Net Neutrality**

- The report of the A K Bhargava committee on Net Neutrality was on 16 July 2015 released by the Department of Telecommunications. The six member committee was appointed in January 2015.
- **Highlights of report**
  - Legitimate traffic management practices may be allowed but should be tested against the core principles of Net Neutrality. Further, Improper (Paid or otherwise) Prioritization may not be permitted.



- India specific Net Neutrality approach should be formulated by taking into account international best practices that serve specific needs of the country.
- The primary goals of public policy in the context of Net Neutrality should be directed towards achievement of developmental aims of the country by facilitating Affordable Broadband, Quality Broadband and Universal Broadband for its citizens.
- Over-the-top (OTT) application services should be actively encouraged and any impediments in their expansion and growth should be removed.

- 130.** The Union Cabinet chaired by the Prime Minister Narendra Modi on 16 July 2015 gave its approval to set up an **expert group to classify the Caste names returned in the Socio Economic and Caste Census (SECC), 2011.** The expert group will be chaired **Arvind Panagariya, Vice-Chairperson of NITI Aayog** and will be serviced by the Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment and Ministry of Tribal Welfare. As per the released SECC data on 3 July 2015, there are about 46 lakh Caste/Sub Caste names/ synonyms/surnames/ clan/gothra names. The caste census was the first since 1932.
- 131.** Union Government on 16 July 2015 brought 39 more drugs under the price control regime. These drugs include the ones to treat diseases such as diabetes, infections, digestive disorders and pain among others, in an effort to make them affordable. The new medicines are the latest additions to the price control list, which covers about 652 drugs.
- 132.** Union Government launched National Career Counselling Portal to modernize all government-run employment exchanges. The portal was launched under National Career Service (NCS) project of Union Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship.
- 133.** An indigenously designed and developed Visibility Measuring System DRISHTI was installed at the Indira Gandhi International (IGI) Airport, New Delhi on 20 July 2015. The system developed by CSIR-National Aerospace Laboratories (CSIR-NAL), Bengaluru will be used for reporting the runway visual range, which is a critical parameter for safe landing and take-off of aircraft in poor visibility conditions (<25 to >2000 meters).
- 134.** Union Minister of Consumer Affairs, Food and Public Distribution Ram Vilas Paswan on 21 July 2015 launched the **Surakshit Khadya Abhiyan**, a countrywide campaign, to create mass awareness and capacity building for safe and hygienic food. The initiative complements the widely popular multi-media campaign Jago Grahak Jago which empowers the consumers of its rights and demands.
- 135.** The Prime Minister (PM) Narendra Modi on 25 July 2015 launched Deendayal Upadhyay Gram Jyoti Yojana (DDUGJY) along with various other development projects in Patna. The DeenDayal Upadhyaya Gram Jyoti Yojana for rural areas was launched to provide electrification to all villages and provide Sub-transmission and distribution network to improve the quality and reliability of the supply.
- 136.** India on 28 July 2015 signed a loan agreement of 300 million US dollars with Asian Development Bank (ADB) for its flagship programme National Urban Health Mission (NUHM). The main of the NUHM is to improve the health status of the country's urban population.
- 137.** The Union Government on 24 July 2015 constituted All India Council of Sports as an advisory body for the Union Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports. The Council will be headed by a President in the rank of Minister of State and will include four Members of Parliament, Sports personalities, coaches, sports experts, sports administrators, D-G of Sports Authority of India, D-G of National Anti Doping Agency, Vice Chancellor of LNIPE, officials from Sports Ministry, representatives from National Sports Federations, Indian Olympic Association and NGOs.
- 138.** Union Government sanctioned 1000 crore rupees for the laying of 15.06 km long tracks to connect Indian Railways with Bangladesh through the North East.
- 139.** e-Tourist Visa scheme was extended to China, Hong Kong and Macau with effect from 30 July 2015. The facility was extended as per the decision of the 29 July 2015 of Union Government. With the inclusion of these countries/territories, the total number of countries/territories covered under the e-Tourist Visa scheme will go up from **74 to 77.**



- 140. Indian author Anuradha Roy** and British-Indian Sunjeev Sahota are among 13 international authors long-listed for the **2015 Man Booker Prize**, the prestigious literary prize committee. Roy has been picked for her third novel, '**Sleeping on Jupiter**', and Sahota for 'The Year of the Runaways'.
- 141. Union Cabinet** approved setting up of **National Investment and Infrastructure Fund (NIIF)** to back new and stressed projects may help restart the investment cycle. The fund will have an **initial corpus of 20000 crore rupees** which can be leveraged by infrastructure companies.
- 142. United Nations (UN)** on 29 July 2015 released the report title **World Population Prospects: The 2015 Revision** at the UN Headquarters in New York. According to the report, India will surpass China to become the most populous nation in the world by 2022. In the forecast issued by UN in 2013 India was expected to surpass China's population by 2028.
- 143. After the depression** over the Northern Bay of Bengal turned into a cyclonic storm (**Cyclone Komen**), the cyclone was expected to make landfall on the coast of Odisha and West Bengal.
- 144. Actor Dhanush** produced Tamil thriller 'Visaaranai' will have its world premiere in the competition section of the upcoming 72nd Venice International Film Festival. The festival is scheduled to take place between 2 September and 12 September 2015. Visaaranai will become the first Tamil film to have its world premiere in the competition section of the upcoming at Venice International Film Festival.
- 145. 162 enclaves** of India and Bangladesh were integrated with the main land with the execution of **Land Border Agreement, 1974** between the two countries at midnight on 31 July 2015. This enclave exchange under the 1974 Land Boundary Agreement was effected during Prime Minister Narendra Modi's Bangladesh in June 2015 visit and it helped in redrawing the maps of the two countries.
- 146. India's first Integrated Underwater Harbour Defence and Surveillance System (IUHDSS)** was commissioned in Kochi, Kerala. It is designed by **Israel Aerospace Industries (IAI)**.
- It consists of advance sensors, coastal surveillance radars and sound navigation and ranging systems (SONAR).
  - It is capable of detecting, tracking, identifying and generating warning for all types of underwater and surface threats to harbour security.
  - The integrated system can detect presence of divers and under water threats with the help of this automatic system.
- 147. Union Government** on 31 July 2015 declared **7th August** as **National Handloom Day** every year beginning from year 2015 throughout the country. The first National Handloom Day will be launched by Prime Minister Narendra Modi in Chennai on 7 August 2015. On this occasion, **Sant Kabir Awards and National Awards** for the years 2012, 2013 and 2014 will be awarded and a new **India Handloom** brand for better market positioning of quality handloom products would be launched.
- 148. Indo-UK bilateral Air Exercise Indradhanush** between Indian Air Force (IAF) and British Royal Air Forces (RAF) concluded on 30 July 2015. Indradhanush started in Britain on 21 July 2015.
- 149. 162 enclaves** of India and Bangladesh were integrated with the main land with the execution of **Land Border Agreement, 1974** between the two countries at midnight on 31 July 2015. According to the agreement, 51 Bangladeshi enclaves situated at Indian soil in **Coochbehar District** of West Bengal amalgamated with India, while 111 Indian enclaves in Bangladeshi territory integrated with that country when the clock struck 12 at night. This enclave exchange under the 1974 Land Boundary Agreement was effected during Prime Minister Narendra Modi's Bangladesh in June 2015 visit and it helped in redrawing the maps of the two countries.
- 150. Prime Minister Narendra Modi** today announced August 7 as National Handloom Day to mark the 1905 Swadeshi movement. Modi also launched the '**India Handloom**' brand at a function in Chennai. The brand will help weavers cater to more global markets. The Prime Minister also conferred the **Sant Kabir awards** and **National awards** for the years 2012, 2013 and 2014 to handloom personalities.

151. Rural Development Minister Chaudhary Birender Singh on 4 August 2015 launched **SAMANVAY**, a compilation of all schemes of both Union and State governments for Gram Panchayats. SAMANVAY was launched with an aim **to help MPs in utilising relevant schemes in the planning and implementation of Saansad Adarsh Gram Yojana (SAGY)**.
152. In a move that should make it easier to gauge costs and price movements in the road construction sector, the National Highways Authority of India has released for public comment an **index of prices pertaining only to the sector**. The index is named the National Highways Construction Cost Index (NHCCI). It takes into account 60 items clubbed into three categories—material, labour and equipment—and arrives at a composite index figure. The reference date for the index has been taken as April 2013.
153. **Multi-Application Solar Telescope (MAST)**, **Asia's biggest telescope** was inaugurated at the Udaipur Solar Observatory in Rajasthan. It was inaugurated by Professor U.R Rao, Chairman of Physical Research Laboratory, inaugurated. The telescope was installed under the project undertaken by Union Ministry of Science and Technology and was funded by Department of Space (DoS). The project will be monitored by Ahmedabad based Physical Research Laboratory.
154. The government signed a peace accord with the **Nationalist Socialist Council of Nagaland (Isak-Muivah)**, one of the largest insurgent outfits, which has been demanding a unified Naga identity and a separate '**Nagaland**' State for over six decades.
155. The global advertising agency McCann bagged Tourism Ministry's 'Incredible India' advertising campaign for the period of three years. The current campaign is advertised by **Ogilvy India**.
156. The first Indian Institute of Technology (IIT) in Kerala started functioning from a temporary campus at Palakkad district, scripting a new chapter in the higher education sector in the state.
157. The International Labour Organisation (ILO) and Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FICCI) inked MoU to impart training to Micro, Small & Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) to make them competitive and boost productivity. The MoU was signed as part of the second phase of **Sustaining Competitive and Responsible Enterprises (SCORE)** Global Programme.
158. India's telecom giant Airtel has commercially launched the high-speed 4G services across **296 towns** across India. In April 2012 Bharti Airtel had first launched its **4G service in Kolkata** and from then conducted trials in 51 cities.
159. Three food processing industries in Odisha have been accorded the status of designated food parks by the Ministry of Food Processing Industries (MoFPI) on 7 August 2015. The three industrial estates that got food park status are **Agro Industrial Estate for maize, Nabarangpur, Jagatpur industrial estate in Cuttack and Mancheswar industrial estate in Bhubaneswar**.

#### 'Swachh Bharat' Rankings

- **Mysuru in Karnataka** and **Thiruchirapalli (Trichy)** in Tamil Nadu have been ranked **first** and **second** among 476 cities in the "Swachh Bharat" rankings, the union urban development ministry announced on Saturday.
- Besides Mysuru and Thiruchirapalli, other cities in the top 10 are Navi Mumbai, Kochi, Hassan, Mandya and Bengaluru in Karnataka, Thiruvananthapuram, Halisahar in West Bengal and Gangtok.
- According to a ministry statement, **all the 476 Class-1 cities** in 31 states and union territories, **each with a population of above one lakh**, were surveyed for assessing total sanitation practices covering a set of parameters.
- The survey conducted during 2014-15 was commissioned by the ministry as required under the **National Sanitation Policy of 2008**.

160. Union Government on 10 August 2015 launched the School Nursery Yojana, an initiative to bring students closer to nature. The Yojana seeks to engage class VI to IX in raising of saplings in nurseries created in schools.

161. Bharat Heavy Electricals Limited (BHEL) has added one more coal-based **power** plant to the grid by successfully commissioning the 500 MW Unit-13 of Vindhyachal Super Thermal Power Station (STPS), Stage-V of NTPC. The **project** is located in Vindhyanagar in **Singrauli district** of Madhya Pradesh.
162. Union Government launched new train services in the Northeast Indian states after the completion of Balipara-Bhalukpong (Arunachal Pradesh) and North Lakhimpur-Murkongselek (Assam) sections into broad-gauge. With commissioning of Balipara-Bhalukpong gauge conversion **Arunachal Pradesh state has received second Broad Gauge connectivity in its history.**
163. The Union Minister for Minority Affairs Najma Heptulla launched a new Central Sector Scheme **Nai Manzil** in Patna. The scheme will address educational and livelihood needs of minority communities in general and muslims in particular as it lags behind other minority communities in terms of educational attainments.
164. The Ministry for New and Renewable Energy has sanctioned a 1,500-MW ultra mega solar power park for development in Kadapa district of Andhra Pradesh.
165. This will become the third park of over 1,000 MW to be taken up by the state. Two other parks of 1,000 MW each are being executed by NTPC at Anantapur and Kurnool districts, respectively.
166. **Pratyaksh Hanstantrit Labh (Pahal) scheme** is also called as Direct Benefit Transfer for LPG(DBTL). Pahal, the scheme to transfer cooking gas subsidy directly into consumers' bank account, has made it to the Guinness Book of World Records as the world's largest cash transfer plan for households. Some **13.9 crore** cooking gas consumers are enrolled under Pahal.
167. Ministry for Home Affairs will setup a **national fingerprint database** to record pan-India criminal data.
168. The iconic Mughal monument Taj Mahal became the first historical monuments in the world to have a Twitter account of its own.
169. The monument's official Twitter handle @TajMahal was launched by Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Akhilesh Yadav on eve of 69th Independence Day in Lucknow.
170. Arun Jaitley inaugurated 2 Funds.
  - **India Aspiration Fund -**
    - fund-of-fund managed by Small Industries development Bank of India. The India Aspiration Fund is intended to catalyse tens of thousands of crores of equity investment into start-ups and MSMEs (micro and small enterprises).
  - **SIDBI Make In India Loan For Enterprises (SMILE)**
    - The idea behind the launch of SMILE scheme is to provide soft loans in the nature of quasi-equity and term loans on relatively soft terms to MSMEs to meet the required debt-equity ratio norm as also for pursuing opportunities of growth by existing MSMEs.
118. Union government has given nod to set up of **All India Institute of Ayurveda (AIIA)** for imparting Doctor of Medicine (MD) and Ph.D level education in the field of traditional medicine. It was announced by **Minister of State (MoS) of AYUSH Ministry, Shripad Yesso Naik** in a written reply to an unstarred question in the Rajya Sabha. AIIA will be located at **Sarita Vihar in New Delhi**. It will be the apex institute of ayurveda with 200 bedded referral hospital for imparting postgraduate and doctoral education in the field of Ayurveda.
119. The Union Government constituted a three member team to assess the situation over the student protest in Film and Television Institute of India (FTII) in Pune. The three-member team will be headed by the **Registrar of Newspapers in India (RNI) SM Khan** and comprise two more I&B Ministry officials.
120. Union Tourism Ministry will soon confer the title of '**Twin National Heritage Cities**' on the temple towns of **Rishikesh and Haridwar**. This will be the first instance in the country in which tag is being given to any of the cities.
121. The Union Government on 15 August 2015 launched a web portal named Vidya Lakshmi ([www.vidyalakshmi.co.in](http://www.vidyalakshmi.co.in)) for the benefit of students seeking Educational Loans.
122. **Union Telecom Minister Ravi Shankar Prasad** on 24 August 2015 released a commemorative postal stamp on emperor Ashoka. The postal stamp of 5 rupees will be available for sale in the post offices. It is to celebrate the birth anniversary of Ashoka.

**123.** The Prime Minister launched a commemorative coin to mark the inauguration of the birth centenary celebrations of **Rani Gaidinliu**.

#### **124. Religious Census 2011**

- The share of Hindus in the population has slipped **below 80 per cent** for the first time. The population in 2011 was at 121 crores - Hindus make up 79.8 per cent of the population at **96.63 crores (966.3 million)**.
- Muslims, with **17.22 crore (172.2 million)** people, are **14.2 per cent** of the population.
- The proportion of Muslims in the population increased by **0.8 per cent** between 2001 and 2011 and the proportion of Hindus in the population has declined by 0.7 per cent, the proportion of Sikhs has reduced by 0.2 per cent and that of Buddhists have dipped by 0.1 per cent.
- The growth rate of population in the decade 2001-2011 was **17.7%**. The growth rate of Muslims is the highest at **24.6 per cent**, the census reveals. Hindus follow with a **16.8 per cent growth rate**; Christians come next with 15.5 per cent. The growth rates of Sikhs, Buddhists and Jains are less than 10 per cent.
- Christians are the third largest community with 2.78 crore people, that is 2.3 per cent of the population. They are followed by Sikhs (2.08 crores), Buddhists (84 lakhs) and Jains (45 lakhs).
- The sex ratio among Muslims now stands at **951 females for every 1,000 males**, substantially better than 936 in 2001, while among Hindus, it is **939 females for every 1,000 males**, a slight improvement over the 2001 value of 931. **Assam** remains the State with the largest Muslim population as a proportion (**34.22 per cent**).

**125.** Ravi Shankar Prasad, Minister of Communications and Information Technology, and Minister of Law and Justice launched the government's latest health and IT initiative called **Social Endeavour for Health And Telemedicine (SEHAT)** at the India Habitat Centre in Delhi. This venture with the **Apollo Hospitals** is expected to connect **60,000 common service centres (CSCs)** across the country to a common network and provide healthcare access to millions of citizens irrespective of geographical location or connectivity.

#### **NEWS (STATES)**

1. The Kerala government launched the Operation Valsalya project to trace, rescue and reunite the missing children with their family.
  - a. This ambitious programme is envisaged to be implemented on the lines of the much acclaimed **Operation Smile** project in Ghaziabad.
  - b. According to police statistics of Kerala, as many as 69 children have been kidnapped or abducted across the state till June this year. While 116 children were kidnapped in the state in 2014, the number was 136 in 2013 and 147 in 2012.
  - c. Awareness programmes and poster and sticker campaigns would also be carried out to propagate the cause.
  - d. The picture and other whereabouts of children, rescued from various parts of the state under the mission, would be uploaded in the website **www.trackthemissingchild.nic.in**
2. Odisha Government has launched a citizen portal to facilitate citizens with various services. The citizen portal will provide services like character certificates, issuance of FIR copies, tenant's verification, registration of missing permissions, employee's verification and registration of lost property. The users can access **www.citizenportal-op.gov.in** and get themselves registered to avail the services.



3. Rajasthan Chief Minister Vasundhara Raje released the **state's first start-up policy** to promote entrepreneurship at a two-day Rajasthan Startup Fest 2015 in Jaipur's Sitapura area. The start-up policy, unveiled by Raje while inaugurating the event, aims to strengthen the start-up eco-system in the state by setting up 50 incubators/accelerators, supporting 500 start-ups, creating 100,000 square feet of incubation, and mobilising Rs 500-crore angel/venture capital funding in the next five years.
4. Haryana Women and Child Development Minister Kavita Jain on 31 August 2015 inaugurated state's **first One Stop Centre**, known as **Sakhi**, at Karnal. The center will play a role in helping the women in distress. This is the second such centre in the country after Chhattisgarh. The Center would provide help to sexually, mentally and emotionally harassed women and others. **Note:** Haryana is also the second state in the country to have women police stations. These women police stations were opened with an aim to provide security to women.
5. To encourage and nurture innovative activities in the MSME sector, an Intellectual Property Rights (IPR) Facilitation Centre for MSMEs was inaugurated at Lucknow. PHD Chamber of Commerce and Industry (PHDCCI) is a New-Delhi based multi-state agency engaged in the promotion of industry, trade and entrepreneurship.
6. Haryana has bagged the Skoch Order-of-Merit national award in implementation of six e-Governance and IT initiatives in the state. **Note:** Skoch Order-of-Merit national award Bestowed upon top performing government organisations and private organisations working with the government. It is given by Skoch Consultancy Services Private Limited, a strategy and management consulting firm founded in 1997 and it recognises the best practices and governance models that aim for excellent and efficient implementation of programmes and services delivery.
6. Andhra Pradesh government has rechristened the AP State Enterprise Architecture (APSEA) as 'e-Pragati.' APSEA is a comprehensive architecture to leverage the latest advances in e-governance tools. With e-Pragati, Andhra Pradesh becomes the first state in India to conceive and execute a state-wide enterprise architecture.
7. Tamil Nadu Chief Minister Jayalalithaa launched the Amma Baby Kit Scheme that she announced last year. Babies born in government hospitals would receive the kit worth Rs. 1,000 with 16 items including a dress, mosquito net, soap, shampoo, hand sanitiser, baby rattle, nail clipper among others. 68 per cent of child births in the state take place in government hospitals and the project would benefit 6.7 lakh newborns." Ms Jayalalithaa had earlier launched Amma Unavagams popularly known as Amma canteens, which serve high quality subsidised food.
8. Himalaya Diwas on 9th September was celebrated in Uttarakhand with noted environmentalist Sundarlal Bahuguna administering an oath to children to conserve the Himalayas. In 2010, there was an environment activists meet that decided that September 9 would be celebrated as Himalay Diwas and Chief Minister Harish Rawat in 2014 officially declared September 9 as 'Himalaya Diwas' – a day which would be celebrated across the State to spread the message of conservation of the Himalayan ecosystems.
9. Rajasthan became the **first state** in the country to submit its annual action plan under the newly launched **Atal Mission for Rejuvenation and Urban Transformation (AMRUT)** targeting universal coverage in respect of water supply connections and sewerage connections to all urban households in the state.
10. The Andhra Pradesh government today unveiled a new tourism policy. The policy's objectives are to facilitate investments in the tourism sector to the tune of Rs 10,000 crore, raise its contribution to 7 per cent of the state GDP and create 5 lakh additional jobs by 2020.
11. In Kerala, Perumanna Grama Panchayat in Kozhikode district has become the first Panchayat in the State, to declare a water policy on the lines of the State government's water policy declared in 2008. The water policy of Perumanna was drafted with the help of the Centre for Water Resources Development and Management, Kunnamangalam, after a detailed study of water resources and usage in the Panchayat over the last two years



12. Chief Minister N. Chandrababu Naidu launched the 'mee bhoomi' portal, a digital repository of land records in the State. (<http://meebhoomi.ap.gov.in>). The portal makes all land details, including that of the Adangal/Pahani and 1-B land available for people. It also enlists details of land owners, area, assessment, water source, soil type, nature of possession of the land, liabilities, tenancy and crops grown.
13. Maharashtra Government has declared the **Blue Mormon (Papilio polymnestor)** as the State butterfly. The Blue Mormon is a large, swallowtail butterfly found primarily in Sri Lanka and India.
14. Kerala Government has declared June 22 as 'Snake Bird Day' in a bid to protect the endangered species which is also known as Indian darter. It is water bird which is also known as Indian darter (*Anhinga melanogaster*). It has large slender long-necked water bird and is mostly black with silver wing markings.
15. The district administration in Kerala will launch a campaign to ensure maximum users of the Digital Locker facility being launched country-wide on July. The concept is to provide a private storage space linked to a citizen's Aadhaar number. The locker can be used to keep the citizen's e-Documents secure and to share in the Uniform Resource Identifier (URI) to various departments where a copy is to be produced.
16. Rajasthan has become number one state in the country in terms of total installed capacity of solar energy as revealed in a recently released data by the Union Ministry of New and Renewable Energy.
17. Mumbai has been ranked the fifth most budget-friendly city among 40 key tourist cities of the world, according to a survey by TripAdvisor. Mumbai comes after Hanoi (Vietnam), Warsaw (Poland), Sharm el Sheikh (Egypt) and Bangkok (Thailand), in the 2015 TripIndex Cities, the annual TripAdvisor cost comparison study showed.
18. Andhra to form a sub committee "Krishi Cabinet". This sub-committee will focus on the challenges of the Primary Sector Mission of state government undertaken to make agriculture and its allied activities profitable and sustainable for all-round improvement of the rural economy.
19. Nadia district in West Bengal has won the United Nations Public Service Award 2015 in the category of improving delivery of public services for or eliminating open defecation in the district. The award was presented by the acting Secretary General of the UN Lenni Montiel to District Magistrate of Nadia and Sabhapati of Nadia Zilla Parishad in Medellin, Colombia.
20. Odisha Government launches Aahar scheme.
21. Andhra Pradesh Cabinet approved Amaravathi as capital of the State.
22. Essel, Rajasthan government ink Rs 4k crore pact for solar parks.
23. Uttar Pradesh State Road Transport Corporation (UPSRTC) has become the first State transport corporation to have a vehicle tracking system for inter-city buses, which has led to a reduction in accidents and deaths as drivers are wary of crossing the speed limits.
24. Haryana Government named Parineeti Chopra as its brand ambassador for Prime Minister Narendra Modi's pet 'Beti Bachao-Beti Padhao' campaign to promote the cause of girl child.
25. The Union Railways Ministry and the Odisha Government on 20 July 2015 signed Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) for implementation of Dasapalla-Bolangir segment of Khurda Road-Bolangir New Broad Gauge Railway Line on cost sharing basis.
26. **Maharashtra Cabinet Approves Shyamaprasad Mukherjee Jan Van Vikas Scheme.** The main objective of this scheme is to reduce the man-animal conflict and to achieve sustainable development of these villages.
27. Gujarat government issued a notification in Ahmedabad on making voting compulsory for people of the state during elections to local self governing bodies. The notification would mean that people have to compulsorily vote from now onwards during elections held for municipal corporations, municipalities, and all village panchayats. The Act has also made provisions to penalise those who fail to vote. However, the notification issued today has not specified what punishment would be meted out to voters who fail to exercise their franchise.
28. The first defence park in the nation, which would make components required for defence establishments, is to come up at Ottapalam after the central government gave its 'in-principle' approval for the same.
29. Telangana will soon be the first State in the country to make its IT and ITES buildings differently abled-friendly. In a first-of-its-kind initiative undertaken by the NASSCOM Foundation, 175 companies based out of

- two IT parks in Hyderabad will go for retrofitting their buildings to suit the needs of differently abled employees.
30. The Nashik-Trimbakeshwar Simhastha Kumbh Mela began on 14 July 2015. The year-long festival will end 11 August 2016.
  31. The state government of Tamil Nadu on 31 July 2015 instituted a youth award in the name of former President Dr APJ Abdul Kalam. The award would be given on every Independence Day (15 August) to a person from the state who works with exceptional merit in science, humanities and students welfare. Dr Kalam's birthday on October 15th would be celebrated as the **Youth Revival Day**.
  32. Punjab Chief Minister Parkash Singh Badal on Thursday launched the State Portal ePMS (Electronic Projects Management System) to fast track infrastructural development. The project was kicked off to enhance efficiency, bring transparency, boost the investor confidence, revive the investment cycle, eliminate the human interaction and improve the communication between industries to Government (B2G), State to Centre (G2G), or vice versa (G2B).
  33. Haryana Government launched **Thari Pension, Thare Pass project** to directly transfer pension into the bank accounts of beneficiaries.
  34. The Uttar Pradesh (UP) Cabinet approved **UP Technical University (Amendment) Bill, 2015**. The amendment was approved during a state cabinet meet chaired by chief minister Akhilesh Yadav. The Bill amends the **UP Technical University Act, 2000** to rename the Uttar Pradesh Technical University (UPTU) as **Dr. APJ Abdul Kalam Technical University**.
  35. Tendong Lho Rum Faat (Prayer of the Tendong Mountain), an ancient and natural festival of the **ethnic Lepcha tribe of Sikkim** was celebrated with traditional devotion and fanfare on 9 August 2015. It is an annual festival celebrated in the month of July-August.
  36. Maharashtra government has declared the area along **Thane Creek as Flamingo Sanctuary**. It should be noted that this Sanctuary is **Maharashtra's second Marine sanctuary** after **Malvan (marine) Wildlife Sanctuary which was declared in 1987**.
  37. Telecom Minister Ravi Shankar Prasad has launched a new mobile app 'Disha' to aid digital literacy in Bihar. **Digital Saksharta Abhiyan (DISHA)**: The Digital Saksharta Abhiyan (DISHA) mission was launched on 21 August 2014 that envisages providing digital literacy to non IT literate citizens. The scheme imparts IT training to 52.5 lakh persons that include Anganwadi and ASHA workers and authorised ration dealers in all the States/UTs across the country.
  38. Kochi becomes **first Indian city** to be a member of Beijing headquartered, World Tourism Cities Federation (WTCF) Council and join its league of leading tourism cities across the world.
  39. Maharashtra government has roped Superstar Amitabh Bachchan as its **new ambassador for the Tiger Conservation Project**.
  40. Kerala Government has declared state totally digital, thus becoming first state in the country to achieve it.
  41. Telangana Chief Minister K. Chandrasekhar Rao launched a flagship programme **Grama Jyothi** across the state. The scheme is aimed at comprehensive development of rural areas allowing planning and execution of works by villages themselves.
  42. Himachal Pradesh Government has launched **Rajiv Gandhi Illuminating Scheme for Hill Town Advancement (RISHTA)** project, which is an efficient smart LED based street lighting project. The scheme is also known as **Centralized Control and Monitoring System (CCMS) Smart Street Lighting Scheme for Urban Local bodies** which implements LED based street lighting project.

## NEWS (WORLD)



### 1. The World Bank has revised the global poverty line, previously pegged at \$1.25 a day to \$1.90 a day (approximately Rs. 130).

- This has been arrived at based on an average of the national poverty lines of 15 poorest economies of the world. The poverty lines were converted from local currency into U.S. dollars using the new 2011 Purchasing Power Parity (PPP) data.
- The latest headline estimate for 2012 based on the new data suggests that close to 900 million people (12.8 per cent of the global population) lived in extreme poverty.
- According to World Bank projections About 702 million people or 9.6 per cent of the world population will live below the poverty line in 2015 and mostly it will comprise populations from Sub-Saharan Africa and Asia. There is continuous decline in extreme poverty as result of dynamic economic growth in developing nations and investment in education and health as well as social safety nets.
- With the Sustainable Development Goals adopted in September, seeking to end all forms of poverty world over, the World Bank Group has set itself the target of bringing down the number of people living in extreme poverty to less than 3 per cent of the world population by 2030.

### 2. Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP) Agreement

- The U.S. and 11 other Pacific Rim nations agreed to the largest regional trade accord in history, a potentially precedent-setting model for global commerce and worker standards that would tie together 40 per cent of the world's economy.
- These 12 countries are: Singapore, Malaysia, Vietnam, Brunei Darussalam, Japan, Canada, United States, Mexico, Peru, Chile, Australia and New Zealand.
- The accord — a product of nearly eight years of negotiations, including five days of round-the-clock sessions in Atlanta— is a potentially legacy-making achievement for President Barack Obama, and the capstone for his foreign policy “pivot” toward closer relations with fast-growing eastern Asia, after years of U.S. preoccupation with West Asia and North Africa.
- The Pacific accord would phase out **thousands of import tariffs as well as other barriers to international trade**. It also would establish uniform rules on corporations' intellectual property, open the Internet and crack down on wildlife trafficking and environmental abuses.
- Japan's other barriers, like regulations and design criteria that effectively keep out U.S.-made cars and light trucks, would come down.

### 3. California: Right to Die Bill for terminally ill people

- California allowed **terminally ill patients to legally end their lives under a doctor's supervision after state governor Jerry Brown signed the bill into law.**
- With this signing of the bill, **California became the fifth state in United States** to allow terminally ill patients to legally end their lives.
- The other four states that allow such assisted suicides to terminally ill people are **Oregon, Washington, Vermont and Montana.**

- The bill is partially inspired by the case of a terminally ill Californian woman who moved to Oregon to end her life and is modeled on the lines of Oregon's assisted suicide system.
- **Oregon approved the assisted suicide system for the first time in 1994.**

#### 4. BRICS- Liberalised visa regime

- The BRICS nations will soon allow free movement of "skilled professionals" among members by setting up a liberalised visa regime.
- The declaration was issued at the first BRICS Ministerial meeting on Migration held in Sochi, Russia in line with Ufa Declaration. Minister of State (MoS) for Home Affairs Kiren Rijiju had led the Indian delegation to this meeting.
- The member countries have signed a joint declaration so that skilled professionals are allowed to travel with ease. This will boost economy and human resource knowledge.
- The liberalised visa regime would further improve ties with China.
- It was in May this year, during Prime Minister Narendra Modi's visit, that Chinese tourists were extended the facility of electronic visa on arrival, against the concerns of intelligence agencies.

#### 5. KP Sharma Oli elected as new Prime Minister of Nepal

- K P Sharma Oli was elected as the next Prime Minister of Nepal defeating incumbent Sushil Koirala in a contest which became necessary after parties failed to forge a consensus amid violent protests over the country's new Constitution.
  - In voting held in Parliament here, CPN-UML chairman Oli garnered 338 votes, 39 more than the 299 that he needed to be elected as the prime minister while Nepali Congress president Koirala could only secure 249 votes.
  - A total of 587 members had cast their votes. Lawmakers were not allowed to stay neutral during the voting.
  - While Oli was backed by UCPN-Maoist, Rastriya Prajatantra Party-Nepal, Madhesi Janaadhikar Forum-Democratic and some fringe parties; four Madhes parties in the United Democratic Madhesi Front had supported NC leader Koirala who himself became prime minister with the support from CPN-UML in 2014.
  - Oli has served as the nation's Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs in the Girija Prasad Koirala-led interim government formed immediately after the 2006 People's Movement.
6. Obama administration announced that the peak formerly known as **Mount McKinley** (The highest mountain of North America) will henceforth be known as "**Denali**", its traditional Native Alaskan name.
7. G- 20 have launched a new grouping aimed at boosting the role of women in global economic growth. The W-20 — a grouping of female leaders — was launched on Sunday in the Turkish capital Ankara, where finance ministers and central bank governors from the Group of 20 were meeting for talks on the global economy. The group aims to work toward empowering women and ensuring their participation in economic growth.  
W20's newly appointed President: **Gulden Turkkan**
8. "Shaheen (Eagle)-4," a joint drill between the air forces of China and Pakistan. The joint exercise is part of a series of military exchange programs between the two air forces.
9. Queen Elizabeth becomes Britain's longest-reigning monarch. Aged 89 is also the nation's oldest ever monarch. .



10. Australian Prime Minister Tony Abbott was ousted from the power as leader of the ruling centre-right Liberal Party. He was ousted after he lost to challenger Malcolm Turnbull in an internal party leadership ballot. In the ballot, Abbott received 44 votes while Turnbull received 54 votes. With this, Turnbull, the former Communication Minister of Australia, became Australia's fourth prime minister since 2013 and overall he is the 29th Prime Minister of Australia.
11. Nepal has adopted new Constitution marking the country's transition to a secular and democratic republic. The new Constitution was unveiled by Nepalese President Ram Baran Yadav.
  - a. The new constitution defines the Nepal, a majority Hindu nation as a secular republic divided into seven federal provinces.
  - b. The new Constitution has been drafted by second Constituent Assembly (CA) which was elected in 2013. Chairman of CA was Subash Nemwang.
  - c. The first CA established 2008 after the abolishment of the Himalayan country's 240-year-old Hindu monarchy was not able to finish its task despite four extensions.
  - d. Proclaimed in the name of Nepali people, the new constitution has 35 parts, 308 articles and nine schedules.
12. Cow, which is sacred to Hindus, has been declared the national animal of Nepal in the country's newly-unveiled secular Constitution. With this, the animal has constitutional protection and cow slaughter has also been banned.
13. Alexis Tsipras led left-wing Syriza party has emerged as the largest party in the general (snap) elections to the Greece's Parliament. In this election, Syriza party won 144 seats in the 300 seat Parliament by securing 35 percent of total votes. While the Conservative New Democracy Party has emerged second largest party by winning 75 seats and Golden Dawn has emerged third largest party by winning 18 seats.
14. Egyptian President Abdel Fattah al-Sisi today sworn-in a new government, a week after the previous Cabinet resigned following a corruption scandal. Sherif Ismail, who was Minister of Petroleum and Mineral Resources in the earlier government, took oath of office as the new Prime Minister in the 33-member Cabinet that consists of three women and 16 new members.
15. India is going to chair Group of Twenty (G20) nations forum in year 2018 and New Delhi could be the host of the prestigious annual G20 summit. Turkey will hand over the Chair for the next year i.e. 2016 to China and in 2017 Germany is going to chair it.
16. Facebook has renamed what it had termed its internet access enabling platform, "internet.org" as Free Basics by Facebook. Internet.org will remain as a wide and overarching entity, which includes the provision of free basic services apart from other projects such as enhancing connectivity (through its Connectivity Lab) and an innovation lab.
17. United Nations on 25 September 2015 unanimously adopted an ambitious agreement on the outcome document New Sustainable Development Agenda for the next 15 years i.e. till 2030.
  - a. The document in this regard was adopted in 70th session of United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) and was announced by its President Mogens Lykketoft at the UN headquarters in New York.
  - b. The document, titled **"Transforming our World: The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development,"** outlines 17 broad goals and sets 169 specific targets.
  - c. These are non-binding goals.
  - d. It succeeds the eight Millennium Development Goals adopted by world leaders 15 years ago in Rio 20+ summit of United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development.
  - e. Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) outlines broader sustainability agenda dealing with 'five Ps' people, planet, prosperity, peace, and partnership.
  - f. The new goals include ensuring "healthy lives" and quality education for all, clean water, sanitation and reliable modern energy, as well as making cities safe, reducing inequality within and among countries, and promoting economic growth and good governance
  - g. **Critics:** SDGs are too broad, lack accountability and will lead to disenchantment among those most in need of hope.





18. A first-of-its-kind conference on the contemporary relevance of the 'Bhagvad Gita' was held in the UK, during which Indian and British experts came together with an aim to seek answers to the innumerable questions that exercise and confound all of us today. The ICCR (Indian Council of Cultural Relations) and the High Commission of India organised the conference in collaboration with the Department of the Study of Religions at the School of Oriental and African Studies (SOAS), University of London.
19. German auto maker Volkswagen AG has appointed Matthias Mueller as its new chief executive officer (CEO). He will succeed Martin Winterkorn who had resigned from office following an emissions cheating scandal described as a moral and political disaster
23. The United States has overtaken Saudi Arabia as the world's biggest oil producer in 2014. The US produced 15.9% more oil in 2014 at 11.6 million barrels of oil per day to topple Saudi Arabia's 11.5 million bpd production. While India's oil production declined 1.3% at 895,000 bpd, consumption rose 3% to 3.8 million bpd. India is heavily dependent on imports to meet its oil needs but it is self-sufficient in refining capacity, housing a total capacity of 4.3 million bpd, fourth largest in the world behind the US (17.79 million bpd), China (14.09 million bpd) and Russia (6.3 million bpd).
24. The USA Freedom Act is now operational after the US Patriot Act, the post-9/11 measure permitting mass global surveillance by the NSA on an unprecedented scale, expired on Sunday at midnight after attempts to extend it were blocked by Republican Senator Rand Paul. It was the first reform in a decade limiting the sweeping powers of the National Security Agency to conduct on millions of citizens' telephone conversations.
25. WTO rules in favour of US in the poultry case WTO ruled that the Indian ban on import of poultry meat, eggs and live surveillance pigs from the U.S. was "inconsistent" with the international norms. India banned US agricultural products such as poultry meat, eggs and live pigs to prevent the spread of highly pathogenic avian influenza that has broken out in number of locations across the United States.
26. African leaders signed a historic The Tripartite Free Trade Area (TFTA) that facilitates creation of Africa's largest free-trade zone. It's a 26-nation free trade pact to create a common market that would span half the continent from Cairo to Cape Town. The deal will integrate three existing trade blocs -- the East African Community, the Southern African Development Community and the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA) -- whose countries have a combined gross domestic product of more than \$1 trillion (885 billion euros).
27. Joint military training exercise code named 'Silk Route- 2015' between China and Sri Lanka has begun at Buttala in entral Sri Lanka. It is three-week long joint military training exercise will be conducted in three phases. Phase 1 will be held June 22-28, 2015; Phase 2 will be held from June 28-July 5, 2015 and Phase 3 will be held from July 5 – July 13, 2015.
28. The Asian Development Bank (ADB) and the government of Bangladesh on Sunday signed agreements for \$505 million in loans to further improve the country's railways that will help the national economy and boost subregional trade. This project will also help improve the overall railway transport system in Bangladesh, and aims to reduce transport costs and improve logistics of strategic corridors, such as Dhaka-Chittagong link, for subregional trade.
29. Afghan President Ashraf Ghani nominated a female judge to the Supreme Court on Tuesday in an unprecedented move that has angered some Islamic conservatives. Anisa Rasouli, the head of the Afghan Women Judges Association and a former juvenile court judge, was the only female nominated to the nine-member bench after the announcement was delayed due to opposition by a group of Islamic conservatives earlier this month.
30. The World Bank had cleared a \$650 million loan for a huge Indian freight rail corridor that will span 1,840 kms (1,140 miles) across the northern heartland of the country. Construction of the Eastern Dedicated Freight Corridor will help speed up the carrying of goods between Ludhiana in the western region and Kolkata in the east, and is part of a series of new freight lines.
31. Seychelles becomes 161st member of World Trade Organisation.
32. David Cameron has returned to Downing Street with the Tories having defied polls and won the general election.
33. Greece became the first developed economy to default on a loan with the International Monetary Fund. Greece was not able to repay €1.6 billion it owed to the International Monetary Fund, in what was the largest missed payment in

the Fund's history. It is the first time in the history of the IMF that an advanced economy has defaulted on a loan from the world's financial backstop, putting Athens, which has seen its economy contract by more than 25 per cent since 2009, in the same bracket as Zimbabwe, Sudan and Cuba.

### 34. AIIB takes shape

- India and 49 other founding members of the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB) on Monday signed articles that determine each country's share and the lender's initial capital.
- The signing ceremony took place in Beijing at the Great Hall of the People. The AIIB is expected to focus on infrastructure development in Asia, and unlike the existing International Monetary Fund and World Bank, is unlikely to restrict lending on political considerations.
- The Bank will be headquartered in Beijing, and will have an initial authorised capital stock of \$100 billion. Reflecting regional character of the Bank, its regional members will be the majority shareholders, holding around 75 percent of shares. The AIIB is expected to become operational by the end of the year.
- Ashok K Kantha, India's Ambassador in China, led the Indian delegation at the ceremony and signed the Articles of Agreement.
- India is its second largest shareholder with a stake of 8.52 per cent and voting share of 7.5 per cent.
- The voting shares are based on the size of each member country's economy and not contribution to the Bank's authorised capital. China's shareholding is 30.34 per cent and it has retained 26.06 per cent of the voting rights with veto powers for certain key decisions.

35. Former Finance Minister of China Jin Liqun was nominated by China to be the first president of the Beijing-backed Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB). The nominations for the post of president can be sent by the regional members by 31 July 2015 and the name of the president-designate will be finalised at the 6th Chief Negotiators' Meeting of the AIIB founding members in August 2015.

### 36. UN released Millennium Development Goals Report 2015

- India **fared better and is on-track** in achieving the targets on Universal primary education, Integration of principles of sustainable development into country policies and programmes and reversing the loss of environmental resources and availing the benefits of new technologies especially information and communication in cooperation with private sector.
- Though India has halved its incidence of extreme poverty, the nation is categorised as making "slow" progress on the other 10 parameters, including maternal mortality and access to sanitation.
- Though India has halved its incidence of extreme poverty, the nation is categorised as making "slow" progress on the other 10 parameters, including maternal mortality and access to sanitation.
- India was still lagging on several health parameters such as maternal mortality, infant mortality and basic sanitation. Although the infant mortality rate fell drastically from 88.2 deaths per 1,000 live births in 1990 to 43.8 in 2012, the annual progress on this had been slow. The same could be said for the maternal mortality rate, which fell from 560 per lakh live births in 1990 to 190 in 2013.

37. The 4,000-mile leg — considered one of the most dangerous because there was no immediate landing zone if the plane ran into trouble — set a record for the world's longest solar-powered flight both in terms of time and distance. It also was the longest solo flight by time. The pilot was André Borschberg

38. Conakry, the capital of the Republic of Guinea, was on 21 July 2015 named as the World Book Capital for 2017 by United Nations Organization for Education, Science and Culture (UNESCO). With this, Conakry becomes the 17th city to be designated as World Book Capital, after Madrid (2001), Alexandria (2002), New Delhi (2003), Antwerp (2004), Montreal (2005), Turin (2006), Bogota (2007), Amsterdam (2008), Beirut (2009), Ljubljana (2010), Buenos Aires (2011), Yerevan (2012), Bangkok (2013), Port Harcourt (2014) Incheon (2015) and Wroclaw (2016).

39. World Trade Organization (WTO) members on 24 July 2015 struck a deal to add more than 200 products to the list of goods covered by zero-tariff and duty-free trade. The deal was agreed as part of need to update the 18-year old **Information Technology Agreement (ITA)** as it has become redundant.
40. Kazakhstan became 162th member of World Trade Organization (WTO). The **161st nation** to become member of WTO was **Seychelles** and the next country from the Eurasian Economic Union taking steps towards its accession to the WTO is **Belarus**.
41. The European Union (EU) on 25 July 2015 banned the marketing of around 700 generic medicines manufactured by India's pharmaceutical research company GVK Biosciences. These medicines will be banned in 28 member countries of European Union.
42. **Iran, P5+1 countries reached agreement**
- Ending a 13-year stand-off, Iran and P5+1 countries comprising of the United States, the United Kingdom (UK), Russia, China, France and Germany on 14 July 2015 reached an agreement on the Iran nuclear programme.
  - The agreement called **Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPA)** or **Vienna agreement** was reached after 17 days of almost uninterrupted negotiations in Vienna involving foreign ministers of seven countries.
  - Now, the Vienna agreement needs to be ratified by the UN Security Council (UNSC) and will come into force 90 days later.

### Highlights

- Under the pact, Iran has agreed to limit its nuclear programme in return for economic sanctions being lifted.
  - Iran will reduce its enrichment capacity by two-thirds.
  - Iran will stop using its underground facility at Fordov for enriching uranium.
  - Stockpile of low enriched uranium will be reduced to 300kg.
  - U.N. inspectors will be allowed to enter Iranian sites, including military ones, when they have grounds to believe undeclared nuclear activity is carried out there.
  - UN weapon embargo would be in place for five years.
43. Nelson Mandela International Day was observed across the world on 18 July 2015 to honour the former South African President and Nobel Peace Prize laureate Nelson Mandela (1918-2013).
44. The Brazil-Russia-India-China-South Africa (BRICS) grouping has formally opened the New Development Bank (NDB) as a dedicated channel of alternate finance, which will focus on emerging economies and the Global South. NDB's first President is **Kundapur Vaman Kamath**.
45. Beijing was chosen by the International Olympic Committee (IOC) to host the **2022 Winter Olympics**, becoming the first city to be awarded both summer and winter Games. Beijing beat Almaty, Kazakhstan in a secret ballot of 85 IOC members, held at a convention centre in Kuala Lumpur. Now East Asia is poised to host three successive Olympics. **South Korea's Pyeongchang will host the 2018 Winter Games and Tokyo the 2020 Summer Olympics**.
46. Pakistan was formally conferred Associate Membership status by European Organisation for Nuclear Research (also known as CERN). With this, Pakistan became the first Asian country to become member of CERN. CERN was established in 1954 to provide the infrastructure needed for high energy physics research including particle accelerators. India is currently having observer status in CERN programmes.
47. India and Mozambique inked Memorandum of understanding (MoU) on expanding cooperation in energy sector. It was signed after delegation level talks between Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi and his counterpart **Filipe Nyusi, President of Mozambique** who is on official 5 day visit to India.

48. **Apricia's Spritam** becomes **first anti-epilepsy pill** manufactured with 3D printer to get the US Food and Drug Administration (USFDA) approval. The specified porous structure of the pill 'Spritam' was developed by using ZipDose 3D printing technology by Apricia Pharmaceuticals.
49. Forbes released the list of **2015 World's Highest-Paid Actors**. The list was topped by Robert Downey Jr., for the third year in a row, with earnings of 80 million US dollars. Jackie Chan was placed at the second place in the list with earnings of 50 million US dollars. Vin Diesel stood at the third spot with earnings of 47 million US dollars. **Amitabh Bachchan** and **Salman Khan** stood at seventh position with earnings of 33.5 Million US dollar and **Akshay Kumar** stood at ninth position with earnings of 32.5 Million US dollars
50. The 48th ASEAN (Association of Southeast Asian Nations) Foreign Ministers' meet was held in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia between 4 August and 6 August 2015. The meet was chaired by **Anifah Aman, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Malaysia**. The meet was held under the theme "**Our People, Our Community, Our Vision**", to create an ASEAN Community which is truly people-oriented, people-centred comprising all areas of cooperation.
51. **Super Typhoon Soudelor** – China and Taiwan
52. Search engine giant Google Inc on 10 August 2015 launched a new parent company called Alphabet Inc that separates its highly profitable search and advertising business. The new parent company was formed as part of Google's new organisational structure which will help the company to keep tremendous focus on the extraordinary opportunities and products. With this, Google will be replaced by Alphabet Inc as the publicly-traded entity and all its shares will automatically converted into the of shares of new parent entity with same rights. Alphabet Inc will comprise of the search engine unit and all other subsidiaries. Chennai born **Sundar Pichai** will be the CEO of new Google that is now the subsidiary of Alphabet Inc.
53. **United National Party (UNP) led United National Front for Good Governance (UNFGG) coalition** on 18 August 2015 with 106 seats emerged as the winner in the 2015 Parliamentary elections. But it failed to secure **absolute majority** in the Parliament of 225 members. UNP led by **incumbent Prime Minister Ranil Wickremesinghe** emerged the winner with his alliance taking 45 percent of the vote cast, or about 51 lakh votes.
54. **Bangladesh has become the first country in the world** to receive funds from United Nations for its fast growing Solar Home Systems. In this regard, UN Framework Convention for Climate Change (UNFCCC) has issued carbon credits (CC) worth 3.56 million US dollars to two Bangladeshi organisations.
55. Pakistan and Russia have signed a landmark defence deal including the sale of 4 advance Mi-35 'Hind E' combat helicopters to Pakistan. The agreement was signed by top defence officials from both countries in Rawalpindi as per negotiations for the deal which had taken place in 2014

## Science, Technology and Defence

1. The Indian Navy commissioned the **first indigenously-designed and built torpedo launch and recovery vessel** INS Astradharini. The design of the Astradharini is a collaborative effort of **Naval Science and Technological Laboratory, Shoft Shipyard and IIT Kharagpur** and has a unique design of a catamaran hull form that significantly reduces its power requirement and is built with indigenous steel. INS Astradharini will be used for carrying out the technical trials of underwater weapons and systems developed by **NSTL, a naval systems laboratory of Defence Research and Development Organisation or DRDO**.



2. **HAND-IN-HAND 2015** The India-China combined military training exercise HAND-IN-HAND 2015 will be conducted from October 12 to 23 at Kunming Military Academy, Yunnan, China. **This will be the fifth exercise in the Hand-in-Hand series, which started in 2007.**
3. **"Mitra Shakti-2015"** The third India-Sri Lanka joint training exercise "Mitra Shakti-2015" culminated today after a grand closing ceremony held at Aundh Military Camp, Pune. The 14-day joint training included understanding of transnational terrorism, developing interoperability and conduct of joint tactical operations controlled by a Joint Command Post.
4. **'Malabar exercise':** The Navies of India, United States and Japan began the five-day 'Malabar exercise' on the Eastern coast, in which several warships, aircraft carriers and fast attack submarine would participate. During the exercise which includes both "ashore" and "at-sea training", there would be knowledge sharing sessions on carrier strike group operations, maritime patrol, anti-submarine warfare, among others.
5. **DRDO sets up world's highest terrestrial centre:** Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO) established the world's highest terrestrial centre at 17,600 feet above sea level at Changla near Pengong lake in Ladakh.
6. **National War Memorial and a National War Museum:** Acceding to a long-pending demand of the armed forces, the government approved a Rs 500- crore project for building a National War Memorial and a National War Museum near India Gate.
7. **.Missile Complex in Hyderabad renamed after APJ Abdul Kalam:** The prestigious Missile Complex , which houses research units of DRDO, was renamed after late President A P J Abdul Kalam on the occasion of his 84th birth anniversary on 15th October.
8. India will launch a second multi-spectral remote sensing Indonesian satellite that will help the country to monitor land-use, natural resource and in disaster mitigation. The indigenously-made LAPAN A2/Orari satellite is a successor to LAPAN A1/Tubsat, which was also launched in India in 2007.
9. The aerospace manufacturing facility was inaugurated by defence minister Manohar Parrikar. Situated on the 250-acre Aerus Special Economic Zone (SEZ), the facility is dubbed as the country's largest aerospace machining centre for Airbus Group. Airbus Group SE is a European multinational aerospace and defence corporation. Seated in Toulouse, France, the group consists of the three business divisions Airbus, Airbus Defence and Space, and Airbus Helicopters.
10. Reliance Defence Ltd. (RDL), a wholly-owned subsidiary of Anil Ambani-led Reliance Infrastructure Ltd. has signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) with Abu Dhabi Ship Building (ADSB) to explore an opportunity to set up a strategic partnership for the construction of naval ships including frigates, destroyers and other specialised vessels to address the needs of Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) over the next 10 years.
11. The sixth Indo-Maldives joint Training Exercise commenced on 31 Aug 2015 with an impressive opening ceremony at Pangode Military Station, Trivandrum. Aim of the Joint Exercise is to acquaint both the forces with each other's operating procedure in addition to increased understanding and interoperability between the two Armies.
12. Defence minister Manohar Parikkar commissioned INS Vajrakosh, the latest establishment of the Indian Navy in Karwar, Karnataka. Together with INS Kadamba, 20 km, away, it is now the world's largest naval base east of the Suez Canal. Spread out over 1000 acres, the new naval base would be the home base for a bulk of the Indian Navy's strength on the western coast.
13. **Homo Naledi**
  - Scientists say they've discovered a new member of the human family tree, revealed by a huge trove of bones in a barely accessible, pitch-dark chamber of a cave in South Africa.
  - Researchers named the creature Homo naledi (nah-LEH-dee). That reflects the "Homo" evolutionary group, which includes modern people and our closest extinct relatives, and the word for "star" in a local language. The find was made in the Rising Star cave system.



- The site, about 30 miles northwest of Johannesburg, has yielded some 1,550 specimens since its discovery in 2013. The fossils represent at least 15 individuals.
  - These species could have lived in Africa up to 3 million years ago. They have a tiny brain, a primitive pelvis and shoulders. They have more progressive human like body shape of its skull and have relatively small modern-looking teeth, primitive fingers, modern-looking feet and characteristic long legs.
- 14.** The Govt plans to build “strategic partnerships” with the private sector and has appointed a committee to formulate the guidelines for forging such partnerships in an effort to speed up defence procurements and build domestic expertise in critical areas. A committee has been appointed under **the chairmanship of VK. Aatre**, former chief of the Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO), to formulate the guidelines in six critical areas and is expected to submit its report in 3-4 weeks.
- 15.** Inaugural bilateral maritime exercise between India and Australia AUSINDEX15, commenced off coast of Visakhapatnam. The exercise would start with a 'Harbour Phase', encompassing briefings and practical demonstrations along with professional interactions. This would progress to a 'Sea Phase' which would include fleet manoeuvres, gun firings as well as coordinated anti-submarine exercises.
- 16.** Two Coast Guard Ships -- Apoorva and C-421 -- were commissioned into the service here today by Vice Admiral SPS Cheema, Flag Officer, Commanding-in-Chief, Western Naval Command.
- 17.** ASTROSAT, India's unique space observatory
- Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) launched its first dedicated multi wavelength space observatory into space, besides six satellites for Canada, Indonesia and the United States.
  - Though the national space agency has launched satellites for Indonesia and Canada earlier, this is the first time ISRO is launching satellites for the United States.
  - Though ASTROSAT may be similar to the NASA's Hubble Space Telescope, the former is about 10 times smaller and cannot be compared to the Hubble, which is versatile.
  - Besides NASA, space agencies of the European Union, Japan and Russia have launched similar facilities into the space.
  - It was launched off from the Satish Dhawan Space Centre by ISRO's PSLV C-30 rocket.
  - Other launches
    - Canada's NLS-14 nanosatellite
    - Indonesia's LAPAN-A2 microsatellite
    - four identical LEMUR nano satellites for the United States
  - With this launch, ISRO has successfully crossed the half century mark as for foreign satellites. ISRO has launched 51 satellites for foreign satellites so far.

## ASTROSAT

- The 1,513 kg-weighting cuboid-shaped satellite would be eventually fine-tuned into 650 km above the Earth's surface.
- The satellite can perform simultaneous multi-wavelength observations of various astronomical objects. The sun and star sensors, besides the gyroscopes, would provide orientation reference to the satellite, which has a mission life of five years.
- ASTROSAT aims at understanding the high energy processes in binary star systems containing neutron stars and black holes, to estimate magnetic fields of neutron stars, to study star birth regions and high energy processes in star systems lying beyond the Milky way galaxy.
- The mission also intends to detect new briefly bright X-ray sources in the sky, to perform a limited deep field survey of the Universe in the ultraviolet region.
- According to ISRO, to fulfil these objectives the ASTROSAT carries the following five payloads.

- The Ultraviolet Imaging Telescope (UVIT, capable of observing the sky in the Visible, Near Ultraviolet and Far Ultraviolet regions of the electromagnetic spectrum.
- Large Area X-ray Proportional Counter (LAXPC, is designed for study the variations in the emission of X-rays from sources like X-ray binaries, Active Galactic Nuclei and other cosmic sources.
- Soft X-ray Telescope (SXT) is designed for studying how the X-ray spectrum of 0.3-8 keV range coming from distant celestial bodies varies with time.
- Cadmium Zinc Telluride Imager (CZTI), functioning in the X-ray region, extends the capability of the satellite to sense X-rays of high energy in 10-100 keV range.
- Scanning Sky Monitor (SSM) is intended to scan the sky for long term monitoring of bright X-ray sources in binary stars, and for the detection and location of sources that become bright in X-rays for a short duration of time.

18. Reliance Defence Ltd (RDL), a wholly owned subsidiary of Reliance Infrastructure, has signed an agreement with Emirates Defence Industries (EDIC) for manufacturing, services, knowledge transfer and technology development from the UAE.
19. India-Sri Lanka joint military exercise MITRA SHAKTI 2015 has begun at Aundh Military Station in Pune, Maharashtra. It is third edition of the joint training exercise between both countries that seeks to build Military to Military co-operation and interoperability.
20. Naval warship INS Kochi, the largest-ever warship to be built in India, was commissioned by defence minister Manohar Parrikar at the Naval Dockyard in Mumbai. **MOTTO: "Jahi Shatrun Mahabaho" loosely means "Armed to conquer the enemy" in Sanskrit.** The first of this class, INS Kolkata, was commissioned in August last year, while the third INS Chennai will be inducted towards end-2016
21. Microsoft launched its new operating system Windows-10 with a host of new features.
  - Features:
    - a. **Cortana:** Microsoft's voice-based smart assistant similar to Apple's Siri and Google's Iris.
    - b. **Microsoft Edge:** new web browser which has replaced Microsoft's Internet Explorer.
    - c. **Windows Hello:** It will offer a fast, password-free, secured way to log in with face recognition.
    - d. **Enhanced Windows Defender and SmartScreen:** It will help to safeguard against viruses, malware and phishing. Microsoft has mentioned that the Windows 10 is the most secure Windows ever.
    - e. **Xbox app:** for gaming.
22. Union Minister of Civil Aviation P Ashok Gajapathi Raju launched the GAGAN system (GPS AIDED GEO AUGMENTED NAVIGATION).
23. With this, India has become the fourth nation after the US, Europe and Japan to have inter-operable Satellite Based Augmentation System (SBAS). Also, GAGAN is the first SBAS system in the world to serve the equatorial region.
24. **GAGAN:**
  - a. It is a Satellite Based Augmentation System (SBAS).
  - b. GAGAN has been developed by ISRO and Airports Authority of India over 15 years at an estimated cost of Rs 774 crore. Its primary objective is to establish, deploy and certify satellite based augmentation system for safety-of-life civil aviation applications for the Indian air space.
  - c. The system is inter-operable with other international SBAS systems like US-WAAS, European EGNOS, and Japanese MSAS etc.
  - d. The new navigation system will benefit 50 operational airports in India for now.
  - e. While the GAGAN Payload is already operational through GSAT-8 and GSAT-10 satellites, the third payload will be carried onboard GSAT-15 satellite scheduled for launch in October 2015.
25. Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) on 10 July 2015 successfully launched five British satellites into space from the first launch pad of the Satish Dhawan Space Centre, Sriharikota. These satellites are three

- identical **DMC3 optical earth observation satellites** and **two auxiliary satellites, viz., CBNT-1 and De-OrbitSail**. This was the heaviest commercial luggage carried by a PSLV rocket to date.
26. Indigenously developed helicopter-launched Nag (HeliNa) missile was on 12 July 2015 test fired at the Chandhan firing range in Jaisalmer, Rajasthan. HeliNa is a variant of Nag anti-tank guided missile (ATGM). Nag is a third generation fire-and-forget and can be fired during night and day.
  27. American aerospace and defence major Boeing has signed a framework agreement with Tata Advanced Systems Ltd. (TASL), a wholly-owned subsidiary of Tata Sons, to collaborate in aerospace and defence manufacturing.
  28. **New Horizons** is an interplanetary space probe that was launched on January 19, 2006, as part of NASA's New Frontiers program. Built by the Applied Physics Laboratory (APL) and the Southwest Research Institute, with a team led by S. Alan Stern, the spacecraft was launched to study Pluto, its moons and the Kuiper Belt, performing flybys of the Pluto system and one or more Kuiper Belt Objects (KBOs).
  29. Earth-like exoplanet **Kepler 452b** was discovered by Kepler Mission. The discovery of it was made public during the NASA press conference on 23 July 2015. It resides in a year-long orbit in the habitable zone of a Sun-like star in the constellation of **Cygnus** some 1400 light-years away.
  30. European Medicines Agency (EMA) approved the world's first malaria vaccine called RTS, S or Mosquirix.
  31. Indo-UK bilateral **Air Exercise Indradhanush** between Indian Air Force (IAF) and British Royal Air Forces (RAF) concluded on 30 July 2015. Indradhanush started in Britain on 21 July 2015. For the first time "**Indradhanush**" was conducted in 2007 at Waddington, UK.
  32. Japan for the first time has switched on a nuclear reactor nearly two years after all nuclear power stations were closed aftermath of the Fukushima disaster of 2011. The No 1 reactor at Sendai plant of Kyushu Electric Power started its operations and within few days it will start producing full power. The second Sendai reactor will restart its operation later in October 2015.
  33. Science and Technology Minister Harsh Vardhan inaugurated a 'high performance' computer facility at Earth System Science Organization-National Centre for Medium Range Weather Forecasting (ESSO-NCMRWF).
  34. Essel Group formed a 50:50 joint venture (JV) with the Rajasthan government to set up solar parks in the state. The solar parks will be set up in Bikaner and Jaisalmer regions with an investment of Rs 4,000 crore.
  35. **OS X El Capitan**: Apple unveils new version of Mac software at WWDC 2015 Apple unveiled the OS X El Capitan, a new version of OS X for Macs to enhance the Mac experience. Apple also unveiled the iOS 9 at the Worldwide Developers Conference to enhance the user experience, especially on iPad.
  36. ISRO will flight test an indigenously developed re-usable satellite launch vehicle for the first time this September. Under the project, a plane will be flown into outer space at five times the speed of sound, deliver the payload and the land back like an aircraft. At present, the various stages in a satellite launch vehicle fall off in succession during launch and cannot be reused, making such launches expensive.
  37. Indian Institute of Technology, Madras, has strengthened its research links with Russia by signing MoUs with National Research Tomsk State University, Tomsk, and Ural Federal University, Yekaterinburg. The agreements address various aspects of collaboration between the institutions, including exchange of students and faculty, joint workshops and symposia, and joint research in disciplines of mutual interest.
  38. Defence Minister Manohar Parrikar launched the country's first indigenously-built Scorpene submarine at the Mazagaon Dockyard Ltd in Mumbai.
  39. Brightest Galaxy in Early Universe named after Cristiano Ronaldo as CR7.
  40. India successfully test-fired its nuclear-capable Dhanush ballistic missile with a strike range of 350 km from a naval ship off the Odisha coast.
  41. India successfully test-fired nuclear weapons-capable Agni-III ballistic missile from the Wheeler Island off Odisha coast. The missile has a strike range of more than 3,000 k.m.
  42. The Indian Navy launched 'Visakhapatnam', the first of stealth destroyers under the P15-B project.
  43. Surface-to-air short range Akash missile system inducted into Indian Army.
  44. India-Singapore bilateral naval exercise SIMBEX-15 commences in Singapore.



45. India's indigenously developed Beyond Visual Range (BVR) air-to-air missile Astra was successfully tested from a Sukhoi- 30 fighter aircraft.
46. India successfully test-fired its indigenously developed, intercontinental surface-to-surface nuclear capable ballistic missile Agni-5, which has a strike range of over 5000 kms and can carry a nuclear warhead of over one tonne, from Wheeler's Island off Odisha.
47. Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) fully commissioned and started commercial production at the **first indigenous Titanium Sponge Plant at Chavara in Kerala.**
48. India and Singapore on 21 July 2015 signed Technical Agreement (TA) on sharing white-shipping information to enhance maritime cooperation between the two navies. The Singapore Navy and the Indian Navy conduct the Singapore-India Maritime Bilateral Exercise (**SIMBEX**) together annually. In 2015, the SIMBEX was held in May, this was the 22nd in the series.
49. India's first Integrated Underwater Harbour Defence and Surveillance System (IUHDSS) was commissioned in Kochi, Kerala. It is designed by **Israel Aerospace Industries (IAI)**. India and Myanmar on 6 August 2015 inked an agreement to set up **Centre of Excellence in Software Development and Training (CESDT)** in Myanmar. The project to be set up with the financial support through **ASEAN-India Cooperation fund** will be implemented by C-DAC.



## AGREEMENTS AND VISITS

1. India and Germany inked 18 MoUs after wide-ranging talks between Prime Minister Narendra Modi and German Chancellor Angela Merkel.
  - The fast-track approvals process will ensure that German firms will have a single point of contact in the Indian administration, helping them to navigate a web of red tape that often thwarts business initiative.
  - The agreement is the first of its kind and comes as Prime Minister Narendra Modi seeks to attract foreign investment in support of his "Make in India" drive to boost industrial investment and create skilled jobs.
  - India and Germany also agreed to enhance ties in key areas of defence manufacturing, trade, intelligence and clean energy here after which 18 MoUs were inked.
  - Germany will also provide assistance of over one billion euros for India's green energy corridor and solar projects.



- The pacts signed included joint declaration of intent between HRD ministry and the federal foreign office of Germany regarding the promotion of German as a foreign language in India and the promotion of modern Indian languages in Germany.
  - The inking of the pact comes as both sides were working to resolve the contentious issue of Sanskrit replacing German as a third language in Kendriya Vidyalaya Schools, a decision which was criticised by Germany with Merkel raising the issue during her meeting with Modi on the sidelines of the G-20 summit in Brisbane in November last year.
  - Other MoUs were on Solar Energy, Skill Development, Security Cooperation, Aviation Security, Disaster Management:
  - The PM also expressed his gratitude for the return of the 10th century statue of Durga in her Mahishasurmardini avatar.
2. India and Jordan have signed six Memoranda of Understanding (MoU) in various fields. These MoUs were signed in presence of Jordanian Prime Minister Abdullah Ensour and Indian President Pranab Mukherjee in Amman. The agreements signed are MoU on executive programme for cultural exchange between the Jordanian and Indian governments, Communication and Information Technology to cooperate in the field of ICT and electronics fields, Maritime Transport Sector and other sectors. President Pranab Mukherjee also inaugurated a street named after Mahatma Gandhi in Amman and planted an Olive tree in peace park.
  3. Indian Government partnered with the United Nations' (UN) Better Than Cash Alliance to share success stories from the financial inclusion programme Pradhan Mantri Jan-Dhan Yojana (PMJDY). The partnership is an extension of Indian Government's commitment to reduce cash in its economy. Digital financial services lower the cost of providing financial services and make it more convenient for poor people to access their accounts
  4. 11th session of the India-UAE Joint Commission Meeting for Technical and Economical Cooperation was held on 2 September to 3 September 2015, in New Delhi. The UAE team had reiterated its commitment to undertake extensive investments in India. Al-Nahyan co-chaired the meet of the Joint Commission with External Affairs Minister. The two sides agreed to increase the bilateral trade by 60 percent over the next five years.
  5. A conference of SAARC countries to chalk out and undertake joint efforts on various issues related to disaster mapping and mitigation in the member nations begins in New Delhi. The conference, including the National Disaster Management Authority (NDMA) and National Disaster Response Force, is being held keeping in mind the prevalent geo-climatic conditions as well as increased frequency of natural calamities in the SAARC region, especially in the wake of the recent earthquake in Nepal in April.
  6. India and Indonesia have signed a pact for repatriation of each other's wanted prisoners and cooperate in all criminal matters, including gathering evidence. Under the agreement, India will execute summons to an accused person or to any person requiring to attend and produce documents or a search-warrant issued by an Indonesian court. Indonesia will reciprocate with similar action if there is any request from any Indian court.
  7. India and Belarus have set a trade target of \$1 billion to achieved by 2018. This target was decided at the Seventh Session of the India-Belarus Inter-Governmental Commission that was held in Belarus capital Minsk.
  8. Vice-President Hamid Ansari signed two Memorandums of Understanding — on tourism, and on the Mekong-Ganga Cooperation Initiative — with Cambodian Prime Minister Hun Sen following a session of delegation-level talks. The Mekong-Ganga MoU related to five 'quick impact projects', one of which was a \$50,000-grant to Cambodia for the upgradation of an Entrepreneurship Development Centre. The other four projects included two in healthcare, especially to do with malaria, one on agriculture and one on women's empowerment.
  9. The Government of India signed a loan with Asian Development Bank (ADB) for US \$ 123.51 million for tranche 3 of the Infrastructure Development Investment Program for Tourism to continue upgrading tourism infrastructure

and services in Punjab, Uttarakhand and Himachal Pradesh. The loan will be used for development and conservation of places of tourist attractions. It will also be used to improve basic tourism facilities, and to build the capacity of sector agencies and local communities in the States of Himachal Pradesh, Uttarakhand and Punjab.

10. India and the US signed a new strategically important 10-year defence framework. It was decided during the visit of US President Barack Obama to India in January and focuses on issues ranging from maritime security and joint training, was inked by Defence Minister Manohar Parrikar and visiting US Defence Secretary Ashton Carter.
11. India, Belarus ink 6 agreements aimed at strengthening mutual trust and confidence. President Pranab Mukherjee met his Belarusian counterpart Alexander Lukashenko and agreed on a 17-point road map aimed at strengthening mutual trust and confidence.
12. The Loan and Project Agreements for World Bank (IBRD) assistance of US\$ 400 million for Tamil Nadu Sustainable Urban Development Project were signed between the Government of India/ Government of Tamil Nadu and World Bank.
13. World Bank has approved 250 million US dollars loan for Jhelum and Tawi Flood Recovery Project in Jammu & Kashmir (J&K). The project will be funded by loan credit from International Development Association (IDA), a World Bank's concessionary with a maturity of 25 years, including a 5 year grace period.
14. President of Tanzania visits India. India offered its expertise to Tanzania in development of its potentially rich natural gas sector and decided to extend e-tourist visa to people of the African nation even as the two countries signed eight MoUs to expand engagements in diverse areas. The MoUs signed included a loan agreement between Exim Bank and Tanzanian government on a line of credit for \$ 268.35 million for extension of a pipeline project and cooperation in the field of hydrology, tourism and agriculture.
15. India and South Africa have renewed an agreement to extend cooperation in the various fields of science and technology such as astronomy, social innovation, biotechnology, agriculture and indigenous knowledge systems. It was renewed by signing Fourth Programme of Cooperation during the 10th Joint Committee meeting on Science and Technology Cooperation between both nations held in Johannesburg, South Africa.
16. India and United States have signed a series of agreements on health in order to enhance cooperation in health sector. The multiple areas covered under such agreement include cancer research, medical infrastructure development and application of new diagnostic technologies.
17. India and Thailand signed a double taxation treaty and an MoU for setting up an Ayurveda Chair in one of the Thai Universities during the three-day visit of External Affairs Minister Sushma Swaraj. The Minister was the guest of honour on Sunday at the inaugural ceremony of the 16th World Sanskrit Conference, where she delivered her speech in Sanskrit.
18. India, Bangladesh make history with land swap - India and Bangladesh sealed a historic agreement that will settle a 41-year-old land boundary dispute through exchange of territories, removing a major irritant in bilateral ties.
19. Union Cabinet meet chaired by Prime Minister Narendra Modi has approved the signing of Bangladesh, Bhutan, India and Nepal (BBIN) Motor Vehicle Agreement.
20. **India, Mauritius renew hydrographic cooperation for next 5 years.** The MoU was renewed during the IXth Hydrographic Committee meeting held at Mauritius from June 29 to July 1, which also reviewed various ongoing hydrographic projects.
21. India and United States signed Inter Governmental Agreement (IGA) to implement the **Foreign Account Tax Compliance Act (FATCA)**. The agreement will promote transparency on tax matters between the two countries.
22. **Ufa Declaration released at 7th BRICS Summit in Ufa**
  - Head of BRICS (Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa) nations on 9 July 2015 released the **Ufa Declaration**. The declaration was released after the 7th BRICS summit held in the Russian city of Ufa in Bashkortostan from 8 to 9 July 2015.
  - 7th BRICS Summit was held under the theme '**BRICS Partnership – a Powerful Factor of Global Development**'.

- Highlighting the need to reform UN Security Council (UNSC), China and Russia supported Brazil, India and South Africa aspiration to play a greater role in the UN
- BRICS financial institutions, viz., **Contingent Reserve Arrangement (CRA)**, **New Development Bank (NDB)** that was established during 6th BRICS Summit at Fortaleza was ratified.
- Adoption of Strategy for the **BRICS Economic Partnership** to foster trade, economic and investment cooperation between BRICS nations. In this regard, the ministers/sherpas were asked to develop a roadmap for the period until 2020.
- MoU on the Creation of the **Joint BRICS Website** among our Foreign Ministries was signed.
- Recognising the urgent need to further strengthen cooperation in the areas of Information, Communication and Technology (ICTs), BRICS nations decided to constitute a **BRICS working group on ICT cooperation**.
- First meeting of the BRICS Ministers of Labour and Employment will be held in February 2016, which will focus on the creation of decent jobs and information sharing on labour and employment issues.
- India will be hosting the Eighth BRICS Summit in 2016.

**23.** India and Pakistan on 10 July 2015 were accepted as the full members of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO), a six-member regional grouping, including China and Russia. India that has had on the observer status of the group for past 10 years will become a full member of SCO by 2016. The Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) or Shanghai Pact is an intergovernmental organization founded in Shanghai on 15 June 2001 by six countries, People's Republic of China, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyz Republic, Russia, Tajikistan, and Uzbekistan.

#### **24. India, Turkmenistan inked 8 agreements**

##### **List of Agreements/ MOUs signed**

- MoU on supply of chemical products between the Indian Public Sector Undertaking (PSU) 'Rashtriya Chemicals and Fertilizers Limited' and the Turkmen State concern 'Turkmenhimiya'
- MoU between the Foreign Service Institute of the Ministry of External Affairs of the Republic of India and the Institute of International Relations of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Turkmenistan.
- Agreement between the ministry of youth affairs and sports of India and the state committee for sport of Turkmenistan on cooperation in the field of sports.
- Programme of cooperation in science and technology between India and Turkmenistan for the period of 2015-2017.
- MoU between India and Turkmenistan on cooperation in Yoga and Traditional Medicine.
- MoU on cooperation in the field of tourism.
- Agreement on cooperation in the field of Defence

**25.** India and Georgia on 13 July 2015 signed a MoU for cooperation in the field of Election Management.

**26.** India and Tajikistan signed two agreements/Memorandum of Understanding (MOUs) to further strengthen their defence cooperation which is a strong pillar of strategic partnership between both the friendly nations.

- **Programme of Cooperation (POC) in the field of Culture for the years 2016-18:** It is for the protection, preservation and promotion of cultural heritage in both countries, exchange of information and experts and organization of cultural days in each other's countries for greater cultural understanding between the countries.
- PM Modi and President of Tajikistan Emomali Rahmon also agreed to promote the **International North South transport corridor (INSTC)**. The INSTC is the ship, rail, and road route for moving freight between India, Russia, Iran, Europe and Central Asia.

## 27. India, Kyrgyzstan inked 4 agreements

### List of Agreements/MOUs signed

- **Agreement on Defence Cooperation:** The agreement seeks to deepen cooperation between India and Kyrgyzstan in matters relating to defence, security, military education and training, conduct of joint military exercises, exchange of experience and information, exchange of military instructors and observers etc.
- **Memorandum of Mutual Understanding and Cooperation in the field of Elections:** To deepen cooperation in matters relating to legislation on elections and referendums, modern systems and technologies, rights of elections process stakeholders as well as other issues of election administration.
- **MoU between on cooperation in the sphere of Standards:** The MoU was inked between Ministry of Economy of Kyrgyzstan and Bureau of Indian Standards (BIS) to strengthen and enhance technical cooperation in the fields of standardization, conformity assessment and sharing of expertise on mutual trade.
- **Agreement on Cooperation in Culture:** It was reached to deepen cultural cooperation between India and Kyrgyzstan in areas such as preservation of cultural heritage, organisation of folk arts, theatre, youth festivals and cooperation in of publishing and translation of literature, sports and physical culture, exchange of archival materials, history, geography etc.
- PM Modi and President Atambaev also released a Joint Statement of the meet. During the meet, the two leaders expressed satisfaction at the steady development of political, trade-economic relations, cultural-humanitarian cooperation, and agreed to elevate the bilateral partnership to a higher trajectory in the days ahead.

28. India has inked a financing agreement with World Bank (WB) to raise US 250 million dollars financial assistance for Andhra Pradesh Disaster Recovery Project (APDRP).

29. India and Myanmar on issued a joint statement on bilateral cooperation after the conclusion of the first meeting of the India-Myanmar Joint Consultative Commission (JCC) in New Delhi.

30. Union Government and World Bank signed 308.40 million US dollar credit agreement in support of the second phase of the **National Cyclone Risk Mitigation Program (NCRMP-II)**.

31. The Union Cabinet chaired by the Prime Minister, Shri Narendra Modi, gave its ex-post-facto approval for the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) on cooperation to establish the **Pace Setter Fund** - a fund to support **the Promoting Energy Access through Clean Energy (PEACE)** track of the U.S. - India Partnership to Advance Clean Energy (PACE) between India and United States of America.

32. A Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) was signed in Rail Bhawan, New Delhi between the Ministry of Railways, Government of India and the Ministry of Transport, Construction and Regional Development of the **Slovak Republic** on Technical Cooperation in Railway Sector. The signatories to the MoU are, Mr. Ganga Ram Agarwal, Secretary, Railway Board and Mr. Zigmund Bertok, Ambassador of Slovak Republic.

33. **Modi visits UAE:** India and the United Arab Emirates (UAE) elevated the relationship between the two countries to a **comprehensive strategic partnership** and to “co-ordinate efforts to fight radicalisation and misuse of religion by groups and countries for inciting hatred.

### Other Important Events

- The Crown Prince decided to allot land for construction of a temple in Abu Dhabi.
- PM also visited the historic **Sheikh Zayed Grand Mosque in Abu Dhabi**, which is the third largest mosque in the world and can accommodate around 40000 people at a time. It is named after the founder and first President of the UAE, the late Sheikh Zayed bin Sultan Al Nahyan. The other two mosques's which are larger than the Zayed Grand Mosque are the ones in **Mecca** and **Madina** in Saudi Arabia.
- He visited Masdar City, a zero carbon city, where he met with investors.
- He addressed Indian Diaspora of the country at the **Dubai Cricket Stadium**. Indian Diaspora forms 30 per cent of the UAE's population.



- Prime Minister announced that the Indian mission in UAE has set up an **e-migrant portal** to help Indian migrant workers and an online platform '**MADAD**' to assist them.
  - PM also announced a new scheme as part of various measures for the welfare of Indian diaspora living in United Arab Emirates (UAE). The welfare fund will be set up for their benefit, to help them legally so that they can deal with problems.
34. The union cabinet approved the signing and ratification of an agreement between India and Seychelles for exchanging information on tax issues. The agreement would stimulate information exchange between India and the Seychelles for tax purposes to help curb tax evasion and avoidance
35. India hosted the 2nd Forum for India-Pacific Islands Cooperation (FIPIC) Summit, being held in Jaipur which is aimed at stepping up cooperation with the island nation. Prime Minister Modi announced a major plan to open a **new space research and satellite monitoring station** on the **Fiji Islands**. A satellite monitoring station in Fiji will provide India with an independent satellite tracking capacity. At present, India relies on the United States and Australia to assist it with monitoring its satellites over the Pacific. The summit was attended by leaders of all **14 Pacific Islands countries, including Fiji, Cook Islands, Kiribati, Marshall Islands, Micronesia, Nauru, Niue, Palau, Papua New Guinea, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tonga, Tuvalu and Vanuatu**
36. India and Australia signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) on cooperation in the fields of education, training and research. The MoU was signed by Smriti Irani, Union Minister of Human Resource Development and Christopher Pyne MP, Minister for Education and Training, Australia.
37. India will implement the **Sendai framework for disaster risk reduction**. The '**Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030**' was adopted during the third UN World Conference on disaster risk reduction held in Sendai, Japan on March 14-18, 2015 where India was represented by Home Minister Rajnath Singh.

## RECENT VISITS OF PM MODI

Country	Capital	Date	Purpose	Remarks
Seychelles	Victoria	10–11 March	State visit	"Indian Ocean outreach" program. He held talks with President James Alexis Michelin order to strengthen maritime ties and enhance bilateral development and cooperation
Mauritius	Port Louis	11–13 March	State visit	Modi was the chief guest at the Mauritian National Day on 12 March

Sri Lanka	Sri Jayawardana Kotte	13–14 March	State visit	During this trip, Modi also visited the city of Jafna in the Northern Province.
Singapore	Singapore	29 March	State funeral of Lee Kuan Yew	Prime Minister Modi attended the state-funeral of Lee Kuan Yew, the first Prime Minister of Singapore. It was his first visit to Singapore, and he is expected to visit again during the later part of the year for the golden jubilee celebration of India and Singapore's diplomatic relations
France	Paris	9–12 April	State visit	Modi encouraged French companies to participate in the Make In India programme in defense, civil nuclear power and food processing.
Germany	Berlin	12–14 April	State visit	Modi had worked out a state visit to Berlin following his first meeting with German chancellor Angela Merkel. Modi visited Hannover where he pitched his Make in India campaign to various German industries.
Canada	Ottawa	14–16 April	State visit	Modi addressed a huge gathering of overseas Indians in Toronto.
China	Beijing	14–16 May	State visit	
Mongolia	Ulan Bator	16–17 May	State visit	Modi become the first Indian Prime Minister to visit Mongolia. During his visit, he boosted talks on the supplying of Mongolian Uranium to India.
South Korea	Seoul	18–19	State visit	Modi's visit to South Korea was part of India's East Asia policy and Modi's

		May		attempt to promote his Make in India concept to Korean investors.
Bangladesh	Dhaka	6-7 June	State visit	At the invitation of Sheikh Hasina, Prime Minister of Bangladesh. This visit, the Prime Minister's first to Bangladesh, reflects the importance of the bilateral relationship between India and Bangladesh. During this visit, the Prime Minister discussed the ratification of the India-Bangladesh Land Boundary Agreement - 1974 & Protocol- 2011.
Uzbekistan	Tashkent	6 July	State visit	
Kazakhstan	Astana	7 July	State visit	
Turkmenistan	Ashgabat	11 July	State visit	
Kyrgyzstan	Bishkek	12 July	State Visit	
Tajikistan	Dushanbe	13 July	State Visit	
UAE (United Arab Emirates)	Abu Dhabi	16-17 August	State Visit	
Ireland	Dublin	23 September	Official Visit	
United States	Washington D.C.	24- 10 September	United Nations General Assembly	

### SUMMITS, EXPO and CONFERENCE

	HOST	REMARKS
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Global Pharma expo and summit	Hyderabad	4 days from July 23
6 <sup>TH</sup> National Conference on Nuclear Energy	New Delhi	
68 <sup>th</sup> World Health Assembly	Geneva	Health min. J.P. Nadda will preside
RE- Invest 2015	New Delhi	First Renewable Energy Global Investors Meet
World Economic Forum - 2015	Davos, Switzerland	
World Diamond Conference 2014	New Delhi	
SAARC Summit- 2016	Islamabad, Pakistan	19 <sup>th</sup>
G-20 Summit 2015	Turkey	15 <sup>th</sup>
G-20 Summit 2016	China	16 <sup>th</sup>
Nuclear Security Summit	United States	4 <sup>th</sup>
BRICS Summit 2015	Ufa, Russia	7 <sup>th</sup>
IBSA Summit 2015	New Delhi	
G7 Summit 2015	Bavaria, Germany	41 <sup>st</sup>
G7 Summit 2016	Japan	42 <sup>nd</sup>
2nd Forum for India-Pacific Islands Cooperation (FIPIC) Summit	Jaipur	
Disaster Mitigation conference of member countries of South Asian Association on Regional Cooperation	New Delhi	
South Asian Sub-Regional Drug Focal Point meeting	New Delhi	
The Tenth World Hindi Conference	Bhopal, Madhya Pradesh	
Call To Action Summit 2015 on ending preventable child and maternal deaths	New Delhi	

## GDP GROWTH RATE FORECAST

### Revised

Global Agency	2015	2016
S&P	<b>7.9</b> (from <b>6.2</b> )	<b>8.2</b> ( from <b>6.6</b> )
FITCH	<b>7.5</b> (from <b>7.8</b> )	<b>8</b> (from <b>8.3</b> )
MOODY'S	<b>7</b> (from <b>7.5</b> )	<b>7.5</b> (from <b>7.5</b> )
UBS	<b>7.1</b>	7.6
IMF	<b>7.3 %</b>	7.5 %
ADB	<b>7.4%</b>	
Economic Survey	<b>8.1-8.5%</b>	



RBI	7.6%	
United Nations Conference on Trade and Development	7.6%	

## REPORTS, RANKINGS and FORECASTS

### 1. WEF Report: Inclusive Growth and Development Report

- A new study by World Economic Forum (WEF) has ranked India very low globally on most of the parameters for inclusive growth and development.
- However it fares much better internationally when it come to business and political ethics.
- However, India does demonstrate leadership in some area, while naming areas like corruption and rents where it comes 8th.
- For business and political ethics, India ranks 12th, while it ranks 11th on the Financial intermediation of real economy investment pillar, which suggests that money invested in the economy generally gets directed towards productive uses.
- WEF said that another area that policymakers in India would need to prioritise improvement would be 'Asset building and entrepreneurship', in particular the Small business ownership, where India ranks bottom among its peers at 38th place.
- WEF said its first Inclusive Growth and Development Report present a new framework for assessing countries' efforts to foster economic growth that raises the living standards of entire societies
- WEF Report covers 112 economies..

### 2. Seven Indians, including three Infosys co-founders and a Dubai-based education entrepreneur, feature in the latest **Forbes Asia edition in a new group of philanthropists from 13 countries for their noteworthy contributions.**

- Infosys co-founders Senapathy Gopalakrishnan, Nandan Nilekani and SD Shibulal feature in the Forbes Asia's 9th list of philanthropists in the Asia-Pacific region for their individual contributions to health and education sectors.
- Rohan, son of Infosys co-founder NR Narayana Murthy, also feature in the list. He donated a whopping USD 5.2 million to Harvard University Press for promoting ancient Indian literary classics. He represents his father as a philanthropist.
- Kerala-born entrepreneur Sunny Varkey also features in the list. In June 2015, Varkey was in the news for his pledge to donate half his fortune worth USD 2.25 billion as charity in response to the Giving Pledge Initiative, led by Bill Gates and Warren Buffet.
- The two others are India-born brothers Suresh Ramakrishnan and Mahesh Ramakrishnan. Both are London-based entrepreneurs and are founders of Whitcomb & Shaftesbury Tailors on London's Saville Row.

### 3. QS World University Rankings 2015-16

- QS World University Rankings 2015-16 was released on 15 September 2015. It was the 12th edition in the series of annual global university ranking list.



- Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) of the USA was adjudged as the top university in the world and Harvard the second.
- Indian Institute of Science-Bangalore (IISc-B) and the Indian Institute of Technology-Delhi (IIT-D) were ranked 147 and 179 respectively.
- The six performance indicators with corresponding weightages: Academic reputation (40%), Employer reputation (10%), Student-to-faculty ratio (20%), Citations per faculty (20%), International faculty ratio (5%) and international student ratio (5%).
- Among Asian universities National University of Singapore topped the list with the 11th position.

List of Indian University with Rankings- Here is the list of top 7 Universities

University	Rankings
IISc-Bangalore	147
IIT-Delhi	179
IIT-Bombay	202
IIT-Madras	254
IIT-KANPUR	271
IIT-KHAGRAPUR	286
IIT-ROORKEE	391

4. Indra Nooyi, CEO of food and beverage giant PepsiCo is the sole Indian-origin executive in 2015 edition of Fortune's list of 50 Most Powerful Women in Business. This edition of the list was topped by General Motors CEO Mary Barra. She heads United States largest auto-maker and it is her second year as head.

7. Industrialist Mukesh Ambani has been named India's richest for ninth year in a row with a net worth of \$18.9 billion even as his wealth dipped by \$4.7 billion in a year, while ecommerce giant Flipkart's founders made their debut on the country's top 100 rich list. As per Forbes magazines latest India rich list released, Ambani was followed by Sun Pharma's Dilip Shanghvi as the second richest with a net worth of \$18 billion, while Wipro's Azim Premji retained his third place with \$15.9 billion. Flipkart's co-founders Sachin and Binni Bansals made their debut at 86th position with a net worth of \$1.3 billion each.

#### 4. IMF releases World Economic Outlook October 2015 Update

- International Monetary Fund (IMF) released World Economic Outlook (WEO) October 2015 Update titled **Adjusting to Lower Commodity Prices**.
- The report projects global growth for 2015 at **3.1 percent**, which is 0.3 percentage point lower than in 2014, and 0.2 percentage point below the forecasts in the July 2015 World Economic Outlook (WEO) Update.
- The IMF cut its prediction for growth in India's gross domestic product by 0.2 percentage point to **7.3% for the year ending March 31, 2016**, but left its forecast of **7.5%** for the following FY 17.
- The decline in growth in 2015 reflects a further slowdown in emerging markets, partially offset by a modest pickup in activity in advanced economies—particularly in the euro area. This pickup, supported by the decline in oil prices and accommodative monetary policy, will modestly narrow output gaps.

#### 5. Forbes Asia's Richest Families list

- Forbes on 7 October 2015 released the inaugural list of Forbes' 50 richest families in Asia.
- The list was topped by **Lee (Byung-Chull) family of South Korea** with 26.6 billion dollar. The revenue of Lees of Samsung Group in 2014 was equivalent to 22 percent of South Korea's GDP.
- Forbes on 7 October 2015 released the inaugural list of Forbes' 50 richest families in Asia. The list was topped by Lee (Byung-Chull) family of South Korea with 26.6 billion dollar. The revenue of Lees of Samsung Group in 2014 was equivalent to 22 percent of South Korea's GDP.
- Indians hold 14 of the 50 spots, the most from any jurisdiction.
- Besides the Ambanis, the other Indian families in the top ten richest Asian business dynasties include the Premji family, ranked 7th with a net worth of USD 17 billion, and the Mistry family at the 10th place with a net worth of USD 14.9 billion.
- Other Indian families in the coveted list include Godrej family at 15th place with a fortune of USD 11.4 billion, ArcelorMittal group's Mittals (19th, USD 10.1 billion), Birlas (22nd, USD 7.8 billion), Bajajs (29th, USD 5.6 billion), Dabur India's Burmans (30th, USD 5.5 billion), Cadila Healthcare's Patels (33rd, USD 4.8 billion), Eicher Group's Lals at (40th, USD 4 billion).

## RANKINGS

INDIA'S RANKING	INDEX	WHO PREPARES?
85	CORRUPTION PERCEPTIONS INDEX-2014	TRANSPARENCY INTERNATIONAL
142	EASE OF DOING BUSINESS	WORLD BANK
114	GENDER GAP INDEX	WORLD ECONOMIC FORUM
55	GLOBAL HUNGER INDEX	
135	HUMAN DEVELOPMENT INDEX	UNITED NATIONS DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME
29	INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY INDEX	U.S. CHAMBER OF COMMERCE'S GLOBAL INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY CENTER(GIPC)
136	WORLD PRESS FREEDOM INDEX	Reporters Without Borders
143	GLOBAL PEACE INDEX	Institute for Economics and Peace
81	GLOBAL INNOVATION INDEX	Cornell university, INSEAD and the World Intellectual Property Organization
55	GLOBAL COMPETITIVENESS	WORLD ECONOMIC FORUM

## IMPORTANT COMMITTEES

Bibek Debroy	Committee on the restructuring of Indian Railways
Vijay Kelkar	Committee to review and revitalize public private partnership mode of infrastructure development
Ajay Shankar	Committee to review the existing Public Private Partnership Cell in the Railway Board
TSR Subramaniam	Committee to review the processes , laws and Acts of the Ministry of Environment , Forests and Climate change.
T. K. Vishwanathan	Committee to provide bankruptcy code for Small and medium enterprises.
K.V Kamath	Committee to examine the financial architecture of MSME Sector
Raghunath Anant Mashelkar	Committee to recommend best technologies for Prime Minister Narendra Modi's "Swachh Bharat" national sanitation program.
Ashok Lahiri	Committee to interact with trade and industry to give recommendations to the Central Board of Direct Taxes and the Central Board of Excise and Customs for issuance of appropriate clarifications by way of circulars, on tax related issues on a regular basis.

## IMPORTANT SCHEMES:

### 1. DIGITAL INDIA

With the launch of Digital India programme, the government is taking a big step forward to transform the country into a digitally empowered knowledge economy

#### Vision Of Digital India

- Digital Infrastructure as a Utility to Every Citizen
- Governance & Services on Demand Digital





- Empowerment of Citizens

#### Pillars Of Digital India

- Broadband Highways
- Universal Access to Phones
- Public Internet Access Programme
- e-Governance - Reforming government through Technology
- e-Kranti - Electronic delivery of services
- Information for All
- Electronics Manufacturing - Target NET ZERO Imports
- IT for Jobs
- Early Harvest Programmes

## 2. 100 Smart Cities

- Rs 48,000 crore would be spent on creating 100 smart cities across India. Based on the population and area, a fix number has been allocated for each state. Hence, Uttar Pradesh, the most populated state will get 13 smart cities, meanwhile Tamil Nadu will receive 12 smart cities. Maharashtra will get 10 cities, while Karnataka and Gujarat will get 6 each.
- West Bengal and Rajasthan has been allocated 4 smart cities; Bihar, Andhra Pradesh and Punjab there each and Odisha, Haryana, Telangana and Chhattisgarh will get 2 smart cities each.
- Jammu and Kashmir, Kerala, Jharkhand, Assam, Himachal, Goa, Arunachal and Chandigarh, along with National Capital New Delhi will get one smart city each.
- A 'City Challenge Competition' will be held among all nominated cities, to determine the most eligible of them for conversion into smart cities.

## 3. AMRUT for 500 Cities

- **Atal Mission for Rejuvenation and Urban Transformation (AMRUT)** for 500 Tier 2 and Tier 3 cities will also be launched along with smart city project. For AMRUT as well, states have been asked to recommend cities which can be included under this scheme.
- UP again leads the pack, as they can nominate 64 cities under this project. Here is the breakdown for different states:
  1. Tamil Nadu: 33 cities
  2. Maharashtra: 37
  3. Gujarat: 31
  4. Karnataka: 21
  5. Andhra Pradesh: 31
  6. Rajasthan: 30
  7. West Bengal: 28
  8. Bihar: 27
  9. Odisha: 19
  10. Haryana: 19
  11. Kerala: 18
  12. Punjab: 17

13. Telangana: 15

14. Chhattisgarh: 10

- Under this scheme, Central Govt. will provide 30% of the overall cost, if the city has a population of more than 10 lakh; and 50% if under 10 lakh.

#### 4. Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana: Housing for All by 2022

- The third project is the 'Housing for All by 2022' scheme, wherein more than 2 crore homes would be build across all the urban locations in the next 7 years. Central Govt. will provide a grant of Rs 1 lakh to Rs 2.5 lakh for every home.
- The vision is to provide a home to everyone living in a urban city.
- Women, SC/STs and people from Economically Weaker Sections (EWS) and Low Income Groups (LIG) would be the main beneficiaries of this urban housing project.

5. Government announced insurance schemes **Pradhan Mantri Suraksha Bima Yojana** (for Accidental Death and Disability), **Pradhan Mantri Jeevan Jyoti Bima Yojana** (for life insurance) and **Atal Pension Yojna** (for pension).

Features	<b>Pradhan Mantri Suraksha Bima Yojana (PMSBY)</b>	<b>Pradhan Mantri Jeevan Jyoti Bima Yojana (PMJJBY)</b>
Purpose	<b>Accidental Death and Disability</b>	<b>Life Insurance</b>
Eligibility	18-70 years	18-50 years
Number of Policy	One Policy Per Person	One Policy Per Person
When to Join the Scheme?	In any year after giving the premium subject to the age.	In any year after giving the premium subject to the age.
Sum Assured (Fixed)	Rs.2 lakhs	Rs.2 lakhs
Premium	Rs. 12 per annum	Rs. 330 per annum
Cover ceasing age	At the age of 70 years	At the age of 55 years
Maturity Benefit	Nil	Nil
Death Benefit (Natural Death)	Nil	Rs.2 lakhs
Death Benefit (Accidental Death)	Rs.2 lakhs	Rs.2 lakhs
Disability of both eyes, both hands, both legs or one eye and one limb	Rs.2 lakhs	Nil
Disability of one eye or one limb	Rs.1 lakh	Nil
Maximum Insurance	Rs.2 lakhs (From any one of	Rs.2 lakhs (From any one of Bank

cover	Bank account)	account)
Risk Period	1st June to 31st May every year.	1st June to 31st May every year.
Mode of Payment	Premium will be auto debited from account in the month of May every year.	Premium will be auto debited from account in the month of May every year.
Mandatory Document	Aadhar Card	Aadhar Card

## ATAL PENSION YOJANA

### FOCUS: Unorganised Sector.

A **pension** provides people with a monthly income when they are no longer earning. A Subscriber receives pension based on accumulated contribution out of his current income. Under the Atal Pension Yojna Scheme (APY), the subscribers, under the age of 40, would receive the fixed monthly pension of Rs. 1000 to Rs 5000 at the age of 60 years, depending on their contributions.

**To make the the pension scheme more attractive, government would co-contribute 50 per cent of a subscriber's contribution or Rs 1,000 per annum, whichever is lower to each eligible subscriber account for a period of 5 years from 2015-16 to 2019-20. The benefit of government's co-contribution can be availed by those who subscribe to the scheme before December 31, 2015.**

**Eligibility for APY:** Atal Pension Yojana (APY) is open to all bank account holders who are not members of any statutory social security scheme.

**Age of joining and contribution period:** 18 - 40 years. One needs to contribute till one attains 60 years of age.

**Enrolment agencies:** All Points of Presence (Service Providers) and Aggregators under *Swavalamban Scheme* would enrol subscribers through setup of *National Pension System*.

### IMP : Govt modifies Atal Pension Yojana

- The finance ministry announced that it has modified the scheme.
- At present, subscribers have to make a monthly contribution under the scheme, which can be automatically debited from the individual's bank and no premature exit from the scheme before 60 years of age was not permitted, barring exceptional circumstances, account. The finance ministry has also significantly modified the provisions for discontinuation of contribution "in favour of the subscriber", allowing for delayed deactivation as well.
- Changes
  - to allow subscribers to make contributions on a monthly, quarterly or half yearly basis
  - the modified provision permits the subscriber to voluntarily exit with conditions.
  - The account will not be deactivated and closed till the account balance with self-contributions minus the government co-contributions become zero due to deduction of account maintenance charges and fees," it said.
  - The penalty on delayed payment has been also simplified to Rs 1 per month for contribution of Rs 100 for each delayed monthly payment.

## SPORTS

1. The International Cricket Council (ICC) on 1 October 2015 launched the official ICC Women's Team Rankings, which incorporate results in all three formats of the game into one rankings system.
  - Australia was ranked number one following its success in the ICC Women's World Cup 2013 in India and the ICC Women's World Twenty20 2014 in Bangladesh. It also leads the ICC Women's Championship, which is the qualifying tournament for the ICC Women's World Cup 2017.
  - Indian women's cricket team was ranked at fourth place in the list.

- i. Australia
- ii. England
- iii. New Zealand
- iv. India
- v. West Indies
- vi. South Africa
- vii. Pakistan
- viii. Sri Lanka
- ix. Bangladesh
- x. Ireland

### 2. Shashank Manohar appointed BCCI president

- Lawyer-turned-administrator Shashank Manohar was elected unopposed as the BCCI President.
- The 58-year-old Vidarbha-based lawyer will take over the reins of BCCI for the second time after Dalmiya's sudden demise in Kolkata last month.
- Manohar's earlier stint was three years between 2008-09 and 2010-11.
- Mr Manohar will hold office till September 2017.

### 3. Mirza-Hingis win 2015 Wuhan Open

- Indian tennis player Sania Mirza and her Swiss partner Martina Hingis have won the 2015 Wuhan Open Women's Doubles Trophy.
- In the title-clash played at in Wuhan, China the top-seeded pair defeated Romanian pair of Irina-amelia Begu and Monica Niculescu by 6-2, 6-3 score.
- It was overall seventh World Tennis Association (WTA) doubles titles won by the Indo-Swiss pair together in this year so far.
- The duo earlier had won the Indian Wells Open, Miami Open, Charleston Open, Wimbledon, US Open and Guangzhou Open in 2015 season.
- Venus Williams of United States has won the 2015 Wuhan Open Singles Title.

### 4. Russia's Sergey Karjakin wins World Cup

- Russia's Sergey Karjakin has won the chess World Cup, beating compatriot Peter Svidler 6-4, in the final held at Baku, Azerbaijan
- The title was decided in the tie-breakers after the two won two classical games each.





- He is also the **World's youngest Chess Grandmaster at the age young of 12 years and 7 months.**
5. Punjab National Bank (PNB) beat Indian Oil Corporation 5-3 in penalties to win the Beighton Cup hockey tournament at the Sports Authority of India ground. Beighton Cup of Hockey was instituted in 1895 and is one of the oldest field hockey tournaments running till date.
  4. It is named after T.D. Beighton, Legal Remembrancer of the Government of Bengal in British India. It is organised by Bengal Hockey Association (BHA).
  5. **Lewis Hamilton wins 2015 Russian Grand Prix of F1**
    - Mercedes driver Lewis Hamilton of Britain won 2015 Russian Grand Prix title of Formula One.
    - This was his overall ninth victory of the season. Earlier he had won Australia, China, Bahrain, Canada, United Kingdom, Belgium, Italy and Japanese 2015 Grand Prix titles of F1.
    - This race was overall the fifteenth round of the 2015 season.
  6. Ace Indian shuttler, Ajay Jayaram has won the 50000 dollar 2015 Dutch Open Grand Prix badminton tournament at Almere in Netherlands. This is second achievement of him in this season after he had won silver medal in 2015 Korea Open Badminton tournament in Men's singles category. Earlier, **Jayaram has won 3 international badminton titles namely New Zealand Open (2009), Thailand Open (2010) and Czech Open (2013).**
  7. The 2015 China Open was the 17th edition of the tournament for the men (19th for the women).
    - Novak Djokovic of Serbia won the 2015 Men's Singles title of China Open. In the final match he defeated Rafael Nadal of Spain by 6-2, 6-2 score.
    - Overall it was Djokovic's sixth Men's Singles title of China Open.
    - Garbiñe Muguruza of Spain won the 2015 Women's Singles title of China Open. In the final match she defeated Tímea Babos of Hungary by 7-5, 6-4 score.
    - **Sania Mirza (India) and Martina Hingis (Switzerland) pair** won 2015 Women's Doubles title of China Open.
  8. **Shweta Rathore: 1st Indian female bodybuilder to win silver in Asian body building championship**
    - Shweta Rathore became the first Indian female bodybuilder to win a silver medal in the 49th Asian championship, recently held in Uzbekistan.
    - Shweta, an engineer by qualification, won silver in the Women's Fitness Physique category and qualified for the World Championship, to be held in Thailand in November.
    - Shweta is on Judge Panel of Body power Expo 2015 and runs an academy -- Fitness Forever.
    - The 49th Edition of WBPF Asian Bodybuilding and Physique Championship 2015 were held from 29 September 2015 to 5 October 2015. The annual bodybuilding competition was organized by WBPF (World Bodybuilding & Physique Federation).
  9. Durban was officially named as host of the 2022 Commonwealth Games making it the first African city ever to stage the sporting spectacular. The Games would finally be held in Africa after 85 years. The four-yearly, multi-sport event was first staged in 1930, when it was known as the British Empire Games.
  10. The Sports Ministry decided to recognize Yoga as a sports discipline and place it in the Priority category. The Ministry also decided to upgrade Fencing from 'Others' to 'General' category, based on the past

performance in major international events. It has also been decided to place 'University Sports' in the 'Priority' category.

11. India won the three-match cricket test series against Sri Lanka, 2-1. In the third and final match of the series, India defeated the host with an emphatic 117-run. With this win, India also ended a 22-year long drought of a win over Sri Lanka on Sri Lankan soil. **Player of the series - Ravichandran Ashwin of India It was Virat Kohli's first test series win as a Test captain.**
12. Mercedes driver Lewis Hamilton of Britain won 2015 Italian Grand Prix of Formula One. This was his seventh victory of the season. Till now he has won **Australian Grand Prix, Chinese Grand Prix, Bahrain Grand Prix, Canadian Grand Prix, British Grand Prix and Belgian Grand Prix** in 2015 season. He also won **2015 Japanese Grand Prix.**
13. Indian weightlifter Deepak Lather won a gold in the 62 kg category in Commonwealth Youth Games held in Apia, Samoa. This was India's second gold in weightlifting after Jamjang Deru stood atop the podium in the 56 kg category on the opening day of the event.
14. India are being represented by 25 athletes in eight disciplines out of the nine being competed in the CYG. This is the fifth edition of CYG. It happens every four years.
15. **Paes-Hingis win US Open mixed doubles title**
  - Leander Paes created history by winning the U.S. Open mixed doubles title with Swiss partner Martina Hingis and surpassed compatriot and former partner Mahesh Bhupathi's record.
  - The 42-year-old Paes now has won nine Grand Slam mixed doubles titles, against Bhupathi's eight.
  - The fourth seeded India-Swiss pair, edged past unseeded Americans Bethanie Mattek-Sands and Sam Querrey 6-4 3-6 10-7 in a tricky final to win their third Major title together this season.
  - Paes is now only behind legendary Martina Navratilova, who won 10 mixed doubles trophies. Of those 10, two came with Paes, when they won Australian Open and Wimbledon in 2003.
  - With this win, Paes and Hingis, who also won Australian Open and Wimbledon titles early this season, have become the first mixed doubles team since 1969 to win three Grand Slam mixed doubles titles in the same year.
  - It was Paes' 17th Grand Slam title overall and Hingis' 19th. Hingis has won four Grand Slam titles and all of them have come with Indians.
16. Abitha Mary Manuel and Anamika Das on 9 September 2015 won bronze medals at the 5th Commonwealth Youth Games (CYG) in Apia in Samoa. Manuel won the medal in girls 800m race, while Das won it in shot put event on the third and final day of athletics competitions.
17. Indian boxer Vikas Krishan (75kg) won the silver medal in the 2015 Asian Boxing Championships. In the summit clash at Bangkok, Thailand, Vikas was defeated 0-2 by reigning Youth Olympic champion Bektemir Melikuziev of Uzbekistan.
18. **Anirban Lahiri** becomes the first Indian golfer to qualify for a Presidents Cup. He will be part of the International Team in the 2015 championship.
19. The 135th US Open was played on outdoor hard courts at the USTA Billie Jean King National Tennis Center.

- Men's Singles Title

- i. World number one Novak Djokovic beat Roger Federer in four dramatic sets to win his second US Open and 10th Grand Slam title.
  - Women's Singles Title
    - i. Italy's Flavia Pennetta has lifted the Women's Singles trophy of the US Open. Pennetta defeated compatriot Roberta Vinci (Italy). She is the first Italian to win the US Open.
  - Men's Doubles Title
    - i. French pair of Pierre-Hugues Herbert and Nicolas Mahut won the Men's Doubles trophy of the US Open. In the final match, they defeated, Jamie Murray (United Kingdom) and John Peers (Australia) pair by 6–4, 6–4 score.
  - Women's Doubles Title
    - i. Sania Mirza (India) and Martina Hingis (Switzerland) pair won the Switzerland women's Doubles trophy of the US Open. In the final match, they defeated, Casey Dellacqua (Australia) and Yaroslava Shvedova (Kazakhstan) pair by 6–3, 6–3 score.
  - Mixed Doubles Title
    - i. Leander Paes (India) and Martina Hingis (Switzerland) pair won the Mixed Doubles trophy of Final Grand Slam of the US Open.
- 20.** Railways shot putter Manpreet Kaur on 16 September 2015 shattered an 18-year-old national record at the 55th National Open Athletics Championship at Kolkata. Patiala-based shot putter broke the record of Harbans Kaur of 17.43 metres that came in 1997 by throwing 17.96 metres in her second attempt to claim the gold medal, a hat-trick of titles at the National Open.
- 21.** Capital city of Zhejiang Province Hangzhou in East China has been chosen by the Olympic Council of Asia (OCA) to host the 2022 Asian Games. It was first held in 1951 in New Delhi, India. Incheon, South Korean city had hosted last Asian Games in 2014, while Indonesia's Jakarta will host it in 2018 Asian Games.
- 22.** Veteran Test cricket left-hander Shiv Chanderpaul has been honoured with the Icon Award by the Indo-Caribbean Alliance.
- 23.** Ferrari driver Sebastian Vettel from Germany has won 2015 Singapore Grand Prix of Formula One. Earlier he had won Malaysian Grand Prix and Hungarian Grand Prix.
- 24.** India's Ajay Jayaram has won silver medal in 2015 Korea Open Badminton tournament in the Men's singles category. In the final match played at Seoul, he lost to World no. one Cheng Long of China by 14-21, 12-21 score settling to silver medal. With this Ajay Jayaram became first Indian badminton player to win a medal in Korea Open Badminton tournament.
- 25.** Former Indian Cricket team captain Sourav Ganguly has been appointed as President of Cricket Association of Bengal (CAB). Prior to this appointment, Ganguly was the Joint-secretary of the CAB.
- 26.** Indian shooter Abhinav Bindra has clinched gold medal in the men's 10 metre Air Rifle event of the Asian Air Gun Championships held in New Delhi. Abhinav Bindra had won gold in 2008 Beijing Olympics in 10 metre Air Rifle event making him the first Indian to win individual gold in the prestigious games.
- 27.** Sania Mirza and Martina Hingis defeated the Chinese pair of Shilin Xu-Xiaodi You to claim the **Guangzhou Open title. The world No. 1 pair have also won WTA tour events in Indian Wells, Miami and Charleston.**
- 28.** Pankaj Advani won the **IBSF World billiards championship** after outplaying his opponent in the final to take his world title count to 14 here. He is only player in the world to win world titles in all formats of both, Billiards and Snooker. He has also won Arjuna Award (2004), Rajiv Gandhi Khel Ratna (2006) and was bestowed with Padma Shri (2009) by the Government of India.



29. India's ace shooter Gurpreet Singh has won silver medal at 2015 Asian Air Gun Championship held in New Delhi. The gold medal in the 10 metre Air Pistol event was bagged by Boroujeni Safari of Iran with a tally shot of 198.7.
30. Luis Leao Pinto of Portugal has won 2015 MTB Himalaya Title, Asia's premier mountain biking race for the second time in the Solo Men's category. With this victory he received the crown title of 'King of the Himalaya' which he had earlier won in year 2013.
31. **CRICKET**

### Cricket World Cup

- Venue: Australia and New Zealand
- Australia defeated New Zealand at the Melbourne Cricket Ground
- Most Runs: Martin Guptill
- Most Wickets: Mitchell Starc and Trent Boult
- Man of the tournament: Mitchell Sarc
- Man of the final match: James Faulkner
- 2019: England
- 2023: India

**Note:** Test World cup will be held for the first time in 2017 in England and India will host the World Cup in 2022

### 32. Tennis Previous Opens

#### 1. Miami Opens 2015

- Men's singles: Novak Djokovic
- Women's singles: Serena Williams
- Men's doubles: Bob Bryan and Mike Bryan
- Women's doubles: Martina Hingis and **Sania Mirza**

#### 2. Rome Master's 2015

- Men's singles: Novak Djokovic
- Women's singles: Maria Sharapova
- Men's doubles: P. Cuevas and D. Marrero
- Women's doubles: Timea Babos and Kristina Madenovic

#### 3. Australian Open 2015

- Men's singles: Novak Djokovic
- Women's singles: Serena Williams

4. French Open 2015: It was the 114th edition of the French Open and the second Grand Slam event of the year. It took place at the Stade Roland Garros from 24 May to 7 June.



- **Stan Wawrinka(Switzerland)** won his first French Open title, defeating Djokovic(Serbia) in the final.
- Serena Williams(USA) won her third French Open title, 20th Grand Slam Singles title, and third Career Grand Slam defeating Šafářová(Czechoslovakia) in the final.
- In doubles, Safarova and Bethanie Mattek-Sands won the women's title, beating Yaroslava Shvedova and Casey Dellacqua in the final, and Ivan Dodig and Marcelo Melo upset the Bryan brothers to take the men's doubles title.
- Mattek-Sands partnered with Mike Bryan to win in mixed doubles.

#### 5. BNP Paribas Open

- Men's singles: Novak Djokovic
- Women's singles: Simona Halep

### 3. VENUES

GAMES	YEAR	VENUE
Olympic Games	2016	Rio De Janeiro, Brazil
Olympic Games	2020	Tokyo, Japan
Commonwealth Games	2018	Gold Coast, Australia
FIFA World Cup	2018	Russia
FIFA World Cup	2022	Qatar

### PREVIOUS NEWS

1. Tintu Luka bagged her maiden gold in a major international event by winning the women's 800m finals as India finished with five medals on the final day of competitions to sign off third in the 21st Asian Athletics Championships here today. India secured a medal haul of 4 gold, 5 silver and 4 bronze in the championships to finish third behind China (15, 13, 13) and Qatar (7, 2, 1). Japan (4, 3, 11) and Bahrain (3, 3, 2) finished fourth and fifth respectively. This was India's best finish after 2007 in Amman, Jordan where the country was placed second.
2. Lewis Hamilton won Canadian Grand Prix World champion.
3. Former greats Sachin Tendulkar, Sourav Ganguly, and VVS Laxman on Monday joined the BCCI in a newly-constituted advisory panel to guide the board in all matters related to the game.
4. Dhoni has been ranked 23rd on the Forbes list of The World's Highest-Paid Athletes 2015 dropping a notch from his ranking of 22 last year. Dhoni's total earnings stood at \$31 million, including amount from salary/winnings at \$4 million and endorsements worth \$27 million. Floyd Mayweather retains the top spot this year with earnings of \$300 million, more than double the previous high for an athlete. This is the third time in four years that Mayweather was ranked as the world's highest-paid athlete.
5. Serbia crowned world Under-20 champions after beating Brazil in final. Mali finishes third.
6. India's legendary batsman and Bharat Ratna recipient Sachin Tendulkar has been voted the 'Best Test player' of the 21st century in an online poll. The online poll was conducted by Cricket Australia's website for the list of the 100 best Test players since 2000.

7. India, comprising 12-time world champion Pankaj Advani and Aditya Mehta, went down 3-4 in the best-of-seven semifinal match in the Snooker World Cup. Placed third in the prestigious event, this is India's best finish in the competition.
8. Australia and New Zealand will play cricket's first day-night Test in Adelaide from late November. The Test, running November 27-December 1, will feature pink balls that Cricket Australia chief James Sutherland believes will hold up to Test match play.
9. Former world junior champion and Grandmaster Abhijeet Gupta won the 19th Commonwealth Chess Championship. He won the gold medal after settling for a quick draw with his opponent Arghyadip Das in the ninth and final round played at Mumbai, Maharashtra. In the women's section, Padmini Rout won the gold medal. While S Vijayalakshmi and S Meenakshi won silver and bronze medal respectively. In this championship both Vijayalakshmi and Meenakshi had won the last six games.
10. Chile beat Argentina on penalties in final Chile secure their first major trophy in history on home soil after a penalty shootout win over Argentina in the Copa America final.
11. Abhijeet Gupta who is the Indian Grandmaster and also the former world junior champion has won the Commonwealth Chess Championship title which is a major win for him in the recent time. Among the women, National champion Padmini Rout topped a three-way tie for the title with the Subbaraman sisters — Vijayalakshmi and Meenakshi.
12. **Lewis Hamilton wins British GP**
13. **US won the 2015 FIFA Women's World Cup**
14. Skipper Mithali Raj scripted a new chapter in the history of Indian women's cricket as she became the first from the country and overall second to reach the 5000-run milestone in one-day internationals.
15. Indian athletes put up an impressive show at the 2015 World Police & Fire Games winning more than 150 medals. Hosts United States won by far the most medals, 1,777, including nearly 700 golds. Canada finished second with nearly 430 medals. **The Indian athletes's tally included 89 golds and 50 silvers. They competed in only seven sporting categories: athletics, wrestling, boxing, judo, archery, swimming and shooting.**
16. Indian shot-putter **Inderjit Singh** on 8 July 2015 came up with a best throw of 20.27 meter in the final attempt to win the Gold medal of men's shot put event at the **World University Games in Gwangju, South Korea**. With this, he created history to become the **first Indian to win a gold medal at the World University Games**.
17. Defending champions India notched up an emphatic 93-44 win over Sri Lanka in the finals of 4th South Asian Basketball Championship (SABA) at the Kanteerava Stadium here today.
18. **WIMBLEDON: 2015**

Men's Singles: Novak Djokovic defeated Roger Federer

Women's Singles: Seren Williams defeated Garbine Muguruza

Men's Doubles: Jean-Julien Rojer and Horis Tecau

Women's doubles: Martina Hingis and Sania Mirza

Mixed Doubles : Leander Paes and Martina Hingis

- Novak Djokovic: It was his ninth Grand Slam title, and his third Wimbledon Singles title after also winning the tournament in 2011 and 2014.



- Serena Williams: It was her twenty-first Major Women's Singles title and her sixth title at Wimbledon in singles, and twelfth title at Wimbledon.
- Martina Hingis: It was her tenth Major Women's Doubles title, and fifth title at Wimbledon. She was also part of the winning Mixed Doubles team in 2015, her sixth title at Wimbledon. It was her third Major Mixed Doubles title.
- Sania Mirza: It was her first Major Women's Doubles title and her second title at Wimbledon.
- Leander Paes: It was his eighth Major Mixed Doubles title and his seventh title at Wimbledon.
- **BOYS' DOUBLES: Sumit Nagal** and his Vietnamese Partner N Ly. won the Boy's doubles.

19. **Indian Boxing Council to promote professional boxing launched**, IBC is India's first national governing body and was launched with an aim to promote professional boxing and tap the unexplored potential of professional boxing in India.
20. Mexico on 26 July 2015 defeated Jamaica 3-1 in the final of **CONCACAF Gold Cup football tournament** to win the regional tournament for the record seventh time. The final was played at Philadelphia, US. CONCACAF stands for Confederation of North, Central American and Caribbean Association Football. Its member includes the nations of three regions and independent nations of Guyana and Suriname and the French department of French Guiana.
21. Government has conferred Arjuna Award on Indian cricket team off-spinner bowler Ravichandran Ashwin. The award was bestowed upon R Ashwin in 2014, but he was not present during the Award Ceremony held at Rashtrapati Bhawan in August 2014.
22. **Fourteen year old Master Prabhroop Sekhon** on 31 July 2015 won two gold medals in 300 metre and 500 metre Roller Skating at the Special Olympics World Summer Games. The event is being held at Los Angeles, USA. **Special Olympics World Summer Games** are an international sporting competition organized by Special Olympics for athletes with intellectual disabilities. It was founded to celebrate the talents, perseverance and achievements of those with intellectual disabilities.
23. Chris Froome, a cyclist from Team Sky of Britain, on 26 July 2015 won 102nd Tour de France in a three-week slog of furious race around the Champs Elysees, Paris. With this, Froome became the first Briton to win the Tour de France for the second time.
24. Sebastian Vettel of Germany and the Ferrari driver on 26 July 2015 won the Hungarian Formula One Grand Prix in Budapest.
25. Beijing was chosen by the International Olympic Committee (IOC) to host the **2022 Winter Olympics** on Friday, becoming the first city to be awarded both summer and winter Games. Beijing beat Almaty, Kazakhstan in a secret ballot of 85 IOC members, held at a convention centre in Kuala Lumpur. **South Korea's Pyeongchang will host the 2018 Winter Games and Tokyo the 2020 Summer Olympics.**
26. **IPL Spot fixing: Lodha Committee pronounces punishment**
  - SC appointed Justice Lodha Committee pronounces punishment.
  - ICC chief N Srinivasan's son-in-law Gurusath Meiyappan has been found guilty of betting and stands suspended for life from being involved in any activities related to any type of cricket matches. The former Chennai Super Kings official was also ineligible for participation in any cricket activities for five years.
  - Similar sanctions were imposed on Rajasthan Royals co-owner Raj Kundra.
  - India Cements and Jaipur IPL Cricket Private limited (JIPL) were suspended from the league for two years.
  - IPL COO Sundar Raman is still under the scanner and hasn't been given a clean chit, yet.

27. Board of Control for Cricket in India (BCCI) suspended Mumbai Ranji cricketer Hiken Shah with immediate effect. BCCI suspended him after he was found guilty of breaching BCCI's Anti-Corruption Code for participants.
28. **10-year old Shubham Jaglan** on 22 July 2015 won the IJGA World Stars of Junior Golf event in Las Vegas. Jaglan is the son of a milkman from rural Haryana, India.
29. Amelie Mauresmo, the two-time Grand Slam winner and former number one tennis player of France, was on 18 July 2015 inducted into the International Tennis Hall of Fame.
30. **Fourteen year old Master Prabhroop Sekhon** on 31 July 2015 won two gold medals in 300 metre and 500 metre Roller Skating at the Special Olympics World Summer Games. The event is being held at Los Angeles, USA. **Special Olympics World Summer Games** are an international sporting competition organized by Special Olympics for athletes with intellectual disabilities. It was founded to celebrate the talents, perseverance and achievements of those with intellectual disabilities.
31. Government has conferred Arjuna Award on Indian cricket team off-spinner bowler Ravichandran Ashwin. With this Ashwin became 48th cricketer to receive the prestigious award.
32. India's Ranveer Singh Saini has won a Gold medal at the Special Olympics World Games held in Los Angeles. The 14 year old golfer suffering from autistic achieved this feat in GF Golf-Level 2 Alternate Shot Team Play.
33. Union Ministry of Youth Affairs and Sports has recommended name of Indian Tennis legend Sania Mirza for the Rajiv Gandhi Khel Ratna award 2015.
34. Indian champion Joshna Chinappa won the women's squash title in the 15000 US Dollar Victorian Open WSA Event in Melbourne, Australia on 2 August 2015. In the final clash, Chinappa defeated second seed Line Hansen of Denmark 11-5, 11-4, 11-9.
35. Indian women's recurve team of Deepika Kumari, Laxmirani Majhi and Rimil Buriuly on 2 August 2015 won a silver medal at the World Archery Championships in Copenhagen, Denmark.
36. International Olympic Committee (IOC) has officially recognised 'Frisbee' as an Olympic sport. Decision in this regard was taken at the **128th IOC Session held in Kuala Lumpur**, Malaysia by giving official recognition to World Flying Disc Federation (WFDF).
37. Ace Indian gymnast Dipa Karmakar has won bronze medal in women's vault event at the **6th Senior ART Gymnastics Asian Championships held in Hiroshima, Japan**. Yan Wang of China successfully defended her title to win gold medal with 14.988 points.
38. The August edition of the FIFA/Coca-Cola World Rankings was released on 6 August 2015. The rankings show change in top three places with **Argentina** remaining at No 1 position. Argentina is followed by Belgium at No 2 (moved up 1) and the World Cup winner Germany at No 3 position (moved down 1). India with 161 points retained its 156th position in FIFA World rankings
39. India's ace shuttler Saina Nehwal on 16 August 2015 became the first Indian to win silver in the World Badminton Championship. She lost the women's singles summit clash to **Spain's Carolina Marin** 16-21, 19-21 in Jakarta, Indonesia.
40. **Ace Indian Archer Abhishek Verma** has won gold medal in Archery World Cup in the stage 3 in the compound men's individual section.
41. Briton Andy Murray on 16 August 2015 won the Rogers Cup Masters tournament in Montreal, Canada. In the title clash, Murray defeated world number one Novak Djokovic 6-4, 4-6, 6-3. It was Murray's 11th Masters Title.
42. Bangladesh has won maiden Under-16 South Asian Football Federation (SAFF) championship title 2015. In the title clash played at the Sylhet District Stadium the hosts defeated defending champions India 4-2 in penalties shoot out

#### 43. Govt announces Sports Awards





- Five names were officially approved by the Sports Ministry for the prestigious Dronacharya Award this year.
- Based on the recommendations of the Committee and after due scrutiny, **Wrestling coach Anoop Singh** and **Paralympics coach Naval Singh** names were approved on the basis of **current performance (2011-2014)**, while **Nihar Amin (swimming)**, **S. R. Singh (boxing)** and **Harbans Singh (athletics)** were selected in the '**Lifetime Achievement Category**' in which achievements over a period of 20 years is taken into account.
- The award, instituted in 1985, is given to honour eminent coaches who have successfully trained sportspersons or teams and enabled them to achieve outstanding results in international competitions.
- **Romeo James (hockey)**, **Shiv Prakash Mishra (tennis)** and **TPP Nair's (volleyball)** names were approved for the **Dhyan Chand Award**.
- For **Rashtriya Khel Protsahana Purushkar**,
  - **Directorate General of Military Training** was selected in 'identification and nurturing of budding/young talent' category
  - **Coal India Limited** in 'encouragement to sports through corporate social responsibility' category.
  - **Sports Coaching Foundation, Hyderabad** in 'sports for development' category.
- Dronacharya awardees and Dhyan Chand awardees will receive **statuettes, certificates and award money of Rs. 5 lakh each**. Rashtriya Khel Protsahan Puruskar awardees will receive certificates and trophies.
- The awards are to be given away by President Pranab Mukherjee on **August 29, National Sports Day**.

## AWARDS

Award	Awardee	
Padma Vibhushan	1. LK Advani- Public Affairs- Gujarat 2. Amitabh Bachchan- Art- Maharashtra 3. Prakash Singh Badal- Public Affairs- Punjab 4. Dr D Veerendra Heggade- Social Work- Karnataka 5. Mohammad Yusuf Khan alias Dilip Kumar- Art- Maharashtra 6. Jagadguru Ramanandacharya Swami Rambhadracharya- Others- Uttar Pradesh 7. Prof Malur Ramaswamy Srinivasan- Science and Engineering- Tamil Nadu 8. Kottayan K. Venugopal- Public Affairs- Delhi 9. Karim Al Hussaini Aga Khan (Foreigner)- Trade and Industry- France/UK	
Padma Bhushan	20 Awardees Shri Swapn Dasgupta- Literature and Education Swami Satyamitranand Giri- Others Shri Harish Salve- Public Affairs Rajat Sharma- Literature and Education Prof Manjul Bhargava (NRI/PIO)- Science and Engineering- USA (Foreigner)- Others Bill Gates (Foreigner)- Social Work- USA Melinda Gates (Foreigner)- Social Work- USA Saichiro Misumi (Foreigner)- Others- Japan	

Padma Shri	75 Awardees Sanjay Leela Bhansali- Art Bibek Debroy- Literature and Education Ravindra Jain- Art Tarak Mehta- Art Prasoon Joshi- Art Mithali Raj- Sports PV Sindhu- Sports Sardara Singh- Sports Arunima Sinha-Sports	
Freedom of expression.	Edward Snowden	The Norwegian Academy of Literature and Freedom of Expression
South African Cricketer of the year	A B de Villiers	
Award of Liberation War Honour	Atal Behari Vajpayee	Bangladesh Government
Royal Shield Award	Maharashtra-based sculptor Sagar Bhagwan Rampure	Indian Royal Academy of Art and Culture
Space Pioneer award for the year 2015	ISRO for its low-cost Mars Mission.	US' National Space Society.
National Biennial award 2015 for outstanding contribution to the field of statistics to Indians below 45 years.	Professor Pulak Ghosh	by the Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation, Govt of India and it's an 'Award for outstanding and meritorious research work in statistics' in the honour of Prof C R Rao.
Japan's highest civilian award the Order of the Rising Sun, Gold and Silver Star.	CNR Rao	
'Sangita Kalanidhi' title	Sanjay Subrahmanyam	
Best Welfare Organisation of the Year – 2015' award.	India's oldest and largest shipping trade union, National Union of Seafarers of India (NUSI)	The award is promoted by the United Kingdom based International Seafarers' Welfare and Assistance Network (ISWAN)
VK Krishna Menon Award 2015	UK-based philanthropist Benni Joseph Mavelil	

Columbia's highest civilian award 'Orden de la Democracia Simon Bolivar en el grado de cruz Caballero'	Sri Sri Ravi Shankar	
Sant Namdev Award	Prakash Singh Badal	
Punyabhushan Award	Pratap Rao Panwar	
Moortidevi Award	Vishwanath Tripathi	2014
Swathi Puraskar	Ustad Amjad Ali Khan	Kerala Govt's highest honour of Music
Asian Athletic's President Award	Suresh Kalmadi	
2015 Bailey's Prize for Fiction	Ali Smith	UK Author for 'How to be both'
<b>Golden Peacock National Quality Award</b> for the year 2015	Delhi International Airport Limited (DIAL)	
Sahitya Shiromani Samman	Gopal Das Neeraj	UP Government
Champions of Change Award	Satya Nadella	
Business leader of the year award	NRI Industrialists, Hinduja Brothers ( S. P. Hinduja and G. P. Hinduja)	5 <sup>th</sup> Asian Awards
Jnanpith Award	Marathi writer, Bhalchandra Nemade	50 <sup>th</sup> Jnanpith Award
Gandhi Peace Prize for 2014	ISRO	For his contribution to the country's development through space technology and satellite based services.
Master Dinanath Mangeshkar Award for 2015	Anil Kapoor	
Pride of Community Award	Vivek Murthy	Indian origin Surgeon General
Whitley Award for Wildlife conservation 2015	Dr. Pramod Patil and Dr Anand Kumar	
Man Booker International Prize	Laszlo Krasznahorkai	Hungarian writer
2015 World Food Prize	Fazle Hasan Abed (Bangladesh)	Founder and Chairman of Bangladesh- (NGO) BRAC which is world's largest NGO. <b>World Food Prize was established in 1986 by Nobel laureate Norman Borlaug (father of the Green Revolution)</b>
2015 Global Confederation for Higher Education	R. Paul Singh (Indian-American)	



Associations for Agriculture and Life Sciences- <b>World Agriculture Prize laureate.</b>		
Pritiman Sarkar Award 2014-15	Film Society of Jodhpur	for being the best film society in Northern Region in raising awareness and film appreciation.
Golden Peacock Environment Management Award (GPEMA) 2015	Tata Steel's West Bokaro Division	
Highest French Civilian Award Commandeur <b>de la Lgion dHonneur (the Legion of Honour).</b>	Sayed Haider Raza	He was bestowed with this award on the occasion of the <b>French National Day (14 July)</b>
Presidential Award for Excellence in Mathematics and Science Teaching by President Barack Obama	Darshan Jain (Indian-American)	
Grand Prix World Press Cartoon 2014	Parmarthy Shankar	Award for sketching Nelson Mandela.
<b>First ever Nelson Rolihlahla Mandela Prize</b>	Helena Ndume of Namibia and Jorge Sampaio of Portugal	Ndume, a female ophthalmologist and Sampaio, the former president of Portugal. The award ceremony was a part of the annual commemoration of <b>Nelson Mandela International Day</b> , which is observed on 18 July every year.
Fukuoka Asian Culture Prize 2015	Ramachandra Guha	In the academic category. The Fukuoka Prize is offered in three categories viz. Grand prize, Academic prize and Arts and Culture prize.
2015 Asia – Pacific Economic Development Innovation: Policy and Program Implementation Excellence Award in Manufacturing by <b>Frost and Sullivan</b>	DIPP	DIPP was awarded because of its 'Make in India' initiatives
2015 Pacific Asia Travel Association (PATA) award	<b>Kerala Tourism's Muziris Heritage Project (MHP)</b>	In the 'Heritage & Culture' category.
<b>Uttar Pradesh's highest literary award Bharat Bharti</b>	Kashinath Singh	The award is given by UP Hindi Sansthan every year. It carries a cash prize of 5 lakh

		rupees.
Ramanujan Prize	Dr. Amalendu Krishna	Ramanujan Prize, established in 2005 is named after <b>Indian mathematician Srinivasa Ramanujan</b> and is jointly awarded by Italy based International Centre for Theoretical Physics (ICTP), Department of Science and Technology (DoST) of India and the International Mathematical Union (IMU)
Poland's Solidarity Prize	Zhanna Nemtsova	
Cross of Order of the Merit	Raghavendra Gadagkar	Germany's highest civilian honour
<b>Pacific Area Travel Writers Association (PATWA) and Safari India South Asia Travel Award 2015</b>	Goa Tourism Minister <b>Dilip Parulekar</b>	award in the <b>Best Tourism Minister category</b>
<b>Saraswati Samman</b>	Veerappa Moily	He received the award for his epic <b>Sri Ramayana Mahanveshanam written in Kannada</b>
Maharashtra Bhushan Award 2015	Eminent Historian writer Babasaheb Purandare	
<b>James Tait Black award, .</b>	Zia Haider Rahman for <b>his first novel, In the Light of What We Know</b>	<b>Britain's oldest literary prize</b>
UNESCO prize 'Award of Excellence' 2015	Vadakkunnathan temple	For the remarkable conservation efforts of the majestic Sree Vadakkunnathan Temple in Kerala.
National Humanities Medal	Jhumpa Lahiri	Indian-American Pulitzer Prize winner
Gandhi Peace Prize 2014	Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO)	In recognition of its services in transforming India through the use of space technology and space based services
Silver Medal of the prestigious Royal Aeronautical Society (RAeS).	Dr G Satheesh Reddy	DRDO (Defence Research and Development Organisation) scientist

United Nations Champions of the Earth award.	Bangladesh Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina	UN Environment Programme (UNEP) has chosen her for this prestigious award in recognition of her country's initiatives to address climate change.
2015 Nansen Refugee Award	Afghan refugee teacher Aqeela Asifi	UNHCR's Nansen Refugee Award recognizes extraordinary humanitarian work on behalf of refugees, internally displaced or stateless people.
Jnangarima Manad Alankaran	Renowned Urdu scholar Shamim Hanfi	by Bharatiya Jnanpith
2015 MacArthur Fellow	Indian-American associate professor Kartik Chandran	
'Community Impact Award' at the prestigious Google Science Fair in California.	Lalita Prasida Sripada Srisai	A class IX student from Damanjodi in Koraput district in Odisha
Skoch Awards for smart governance initiatives	EPFO	
2015 SASTRA Ramanujan Prize	Dr. Jacob Tsimerman	The SASTRA Ramanujan Prize was established in 2005 and is awarded annually for outstanding contributions by young mathematicians to areas influenced by the mathematics genius Srinivasa Ramanujan
2015 MacArthur Fellow.	Kartik Chandran	Indian-American associate professor
2015 Right Livelihood Awards were announced on 1 October 2015	<b>Arctic activist Sheila Watt-Cloutier</b> of Canada  <b>Tony de Brum &amp; the People</b>	The award was established in 1980 by <b>Swedish-German philatelist Jakob von Uexkull</b> . It honours efforts of

	<p><b>of the Marshall Islands</b></p> <p><b>Kasha Nabagesera: activist,</b></p> <p><b>Jacqueline Ugandan</b></p> <p><b>Italian doctor Gino Strada-</b></p>	people in the fields of the environment and international development.
Skoch Smart Governance Award for Achieving Operational Excellence in Waste Transportation	The Tiruchirapalli City Municipal Corporation	
<b>Man Booker prize for fiction</b> for his reggae- and drug-infused novel “A Brief History of Seven Killings”	Marlon James	<b>First Jamaican winner</b> The prize carries a top cash award of £50,000 (\$76,000).
'Finance Minister of the Year, Asia' by London-based publication Emerging Markets.	FM Arun Jaitley	
<b>“Humanitarian Year”</b> by the Foundation.	of the Harvard Kailash Satyarthi	

Since 1993

<u>Category</u>	<u>62nd NATIONAL FILM AWARDS (3<sup>rd</sup> May'15)</u>
Best Picture	<i>Queen</i>
Best Director	SrijitMukherji, <i>Chotushkone</i> (Bengali)
Best Actor	Vijay, <i>NanuAvanalla</i> <i>Avalu</i> (Kannada)
Best Actress	KanganaRanaut, <i>Queen</i> (Hindi)
Best Supporting Actor	Bobby Simhaa, <i>Jigarthanda</i> (Tamil)
Best Supporting Actress	BaljinderKaur, <i>Pagdi The Honour</i> (Haryanavi)
Best Film (Critics)	Tanul Thakur
Best Feature Film	<i>Court</i> (Marathi, Hindi, Gujarati & English)
Best Music Director	Vishal Bhardwaj, <i>Haider</i>

Best Lyrics	NA. Muthukumar, <i>Saivam</i> (Tamil) (Song: <i>Azhagu</i> )
Best Playback (Male)	Sukhwinder Singh, <i>Haider</i> (Song: <i>Bismil</i> )
Best Playback (Female)	UttaraUnnikrishanan, <i>Saivam</i> (Song: <i>Azhagu</i> )
Best Popular Film Providing Wholesome Entertainment	<i>Mary Kom</i> , (Director : Omung Kumar)
Best Choreography	SudeshAdhana, <i>Haider</i> (Song: <i>Bismil</i> )
Best Child Artist	J. Vignesh&Rames <i>KaakkaaMuttai</i> (Tamil)

### Sahitya Akademi announces 'Bhasha Samman' awards

- Three scholars have been awarded the prestigious Sahitya Akademi 'Bhasha Samman' for contribution to classical and medieval literature in various languages.
- K Meenakshi Sundaram has been selected for contributions to Classical and Medieval Literature (Southern) for year 2013 while Acharya Munishwar Jha has been recognised for Classical and Medieval Literature (Eastern) for the year 2014.
- Charu Chandra Pande and Mathuradutt Mathpal have been jointly recognised for their work towards the enrichment of Kumauni, a language not recognised by the Akademi.
- The 'Bhasha Samman' carries a cash prize of Rs 1,00,000, an inscribed copper plaque and a citation. In case of joint winners, the prize money is equally shared between the winners.

### 16th edition of the International Indian Film Academy (IIFA)

- The award ceremony was held in Putra Indoor Stadium Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia.
- Winners
- Best Film: Queen.
- Best Director: Rajkumar Hirani – PK.
- Best Actor In A Leading Role: Shahid Kapoor – Haider as Haider Meer.
- Best Actress In A Leading Role: Kangana Ranaut – Queen as Rani Mehra.
- Best Actor In A Supporting Role: Riteish Deshmukh – Ek Villain as Rakesh Mahadkar.
- Best Actress In A Supporting Role: Tabu – Haider as Ghazala Meer.
- Male Debutant Star: Tiger Shroff – Heropanti as Bablu.
- Female Debutant Star: Kriti Sanon – Heropanti as Dimpy.
- Best Performance In A Comic Role: Varun Dhawan– Main Tera Hero as Seenu.
- Best Performance In A Negative Role: Kay Kay Menon– Haider as Khurram Meer.
- Award for Outstanding Achievement in International Cinema: Subhash Ghai.
- IIFA Award for Entertainer of the Year: Deepika Padukone
- Best Music Direction: 2 States – Shankar-Ehsaan-Loy.
- Best Lyrics: Galliyan from Ek Villain – Manoj Muntashir.
- Best Male Playback Singer: Ankit Tiwari for Galliyan – Ek Villain.
- Best Female Playback Singer: Kanika Kapoor for Baby Doll – Ragini MMS 2.



## Ramon Magsaysay Awards 2015

- **Sanjiv Chaturvedi** was awarded for Emergent Leadership for his exemplary integrity, courage and tenacity in uncompromisingly exposing and painstakingly investigating corruption in public office. He is an Indian Forest Service officer and currently the deputy secretary of All India Institute of Medical Sciences (AIIMS). He also served as a Chief Vigilance Officer (CVO) at AIIMS during 2012-14.
- **Anshu Gupta** was recognized for his creative vision in transforming the culture of giving in India and his enterprising leadership in treating cloth as a sustainable development resource for the poor. He founded **Goonj** in 1999, which is a non-governmental organisation based in Delhi and works in 21 states across India in disaster relief, humanitarian aid and community development.
- **Kommaly Chanthavong, Laos** was recognized for her fearless, indomitable spirit to revive and develop the ancient Laotian art of silk weaving, creating livelihoods for thousands of poor, war-displaced Laotians, and thus preserving the dignity of women and her nation's priceless silken cultural treasure **Ligaya**
- **Fernando-Amilbansa, the Philippines** was recognized for her single-minded crusade in preserving the endangered artistic heritage of southern Philippines, and in creatively propagating a dance form that celebrates and deepens the sense of shared cultural identity among Asians.
- **Kyaw Thu, Myanmar** was recognized for his generous compassion in addressing the fundamental needs of both the living and the dead in Myanmar -- regardless of their class or religion -- and his channeling personal fame and privilege to mobilize many others toward serving the greater social good.
- The Award established in 1957 is Asia's highest honour and is widely regarded as the region's equivalent of the Nobel Prize.

## Shanti Swarup Bhatnagar award 2015

- The government announced the recipients of prestigious Shanti Swarup Bhatnagar award, considered to be a coveted science honour in the country.
- The Ministry of Science and Technology announced 11 awards in seven different fields.
  - Biological Science category, Balasubramanian Gopal of the Indian Institute of Science (IISc), Bangalore and Rajeev Kumar Varshney of International Crops Research Institute for the Semi-Arid Tropics (ICRISAT) were chosen for the coveted award.
  - Earth, Atmosphere, Ocean and Planetary Sciences- Jyotirnanjan Srichandan Ray from the Physical Science Laboratory, Ahmedabad.
  - Engineering Sciences- Yogesh Joshi from IIT Kanpur
  - Mathematical Sciences- Ritabrata Munshi from the Tata Institute of Fundamental Research (TIFR), Mumbai and K Sandeep from TIFR Centre for Applicable Mathematics, Bangalore.
  - Medical sciences- Vidita Vaidya from the TIFR Mumbai.
  - Physical Sciences- Bedangadas Mohanty from the National Institute of Science Education and Research, Bhubaneswar and Mandar Deshmukh from the TIFR Mumbai were selected.
  - Chemical Sciences- D Srinivasa Reddy from CSIR's National Chemical Laboratory, Pune and Pradyut Ghosh from the Indian Association for the Cultivation of Science, Jadavpur.
- Shanti Swarup Bhatnagar Award is named after the founder Director of the Council of Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR), the late Sir Shanti Swarup Bhatnagar.
- The prize is given each year for outstanding contributions to science and technology. It is also a recognition of outstanding Indian work in science and technology.

## APPOINTMENTS

	Old	New	Remarks
India's first Cyber Security Chief		Gulshan Rai	
Chief Election Commissioner	H. S. Brahma	Nasim Zaidi	20 <sup>th</sup> CEC
CII President	Ajay Shriram	Sumit Mazumdar	
		Meenakshi Madan Rai	First lady judge of Sikkim High Court
Engineers India Limited	A K Purwaha	Sanjay Gupta	Chairman and Managing Director
Vikram Sarabhai Space Centre (VSSC)	M.S. Dathan	K. Sivan	12 <sup>TH</sup> Director
Asian Athletics Association (AAA)		Lalit Bhanot	
FIFA	Sepp Blatter		Quits amid scandal. He was the president for 17 years
PM's 'Special Envoy on Countering Terrorism and Extremism'		Asif Ibrahim	Ex- IB Chief
Infosys Limited Non-Executive Chairman		R. Seshasayee	
Secretary, Department of Defence Research and Development-cum-Director General, Defence Research and Development Organisation (DRDO).		S Christopher	
Central Vigilance Commissioner (CVC)		K V Chowdary	Former CBDT chief Govt has for the first time broken away with the tradition of appointing an Indian Administrative Service (IAS) officer as the chief of the anti-corruption watchdog since it was formed in 1964.
Chief Information Commissioner (CIC)		Vijai Sharma	
Yes Bank, MD and		Rana Kapoor	reappointment

CEO			
		Beno Zephine	the first 100 percent visuallychallenged person to be inducted into the Indian Foreign Services (IFS).
Director, National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB).		Archana Ramasundaram	moved out of the CBI and
non-executive Chairman of the Board, ICICI		M K Sharma as the years.	
Director General (DG) of NSG		RC Tayal	
vice-chairman of Bengal's transgender development board		Manabi Bandopadhyay	India's first transgender college principal
Chief General Manager, Stressed Assets Management Group (SAMG), at State Bank of Patiala.		Papia Sengupta	
Director of CSIR-Indian Institute of Chemical Technology (IICT)		Dr. Srivari Chandrasekhar	
Secretary in the Department of Administrative Reforms and Public Grievances (DARPG)		Devendra Chaudhary	
Head Commercial and Wholesale Banking , IDFC		Ajay Mahajan	
director general of the National Informatics Centre		Tapan Ray	The Department of Electronics and Information Technology
head Amnesty International India		Aakar Patel	
SBI Capital Markets (the merchant banking arm of State Bank of India).		Praveen Gupta	
ICC President		Zaheer Abbas	

Infrastructure financing firm IDFC		Vinod Rai	former Comptroller and Auditor General of India (CAG) as independent director.
Chairman of Narmada Valley Development Authority (NVDA)		Rakesh Sahni	Narmada Valley Development Authority (NVDA) is a multidisciplinary organization of the Madhya Pradesh State Government headquartered at Bhopal
MD and CEO of Petronet LNG		Prabhat Singh	Petronet LNG is a public-private joint venture which sets up LNG Terminals and imports bulk of India's LNG
Director General of <b>The Energy and Resources Institute (TERI)</b>		Ajay Mathur	He succeeded RK Pachauri who was removed from the top most position over sexual harassment charges.
Chairman of <b>TRAI</b>		Ram Sewak Sharma	The post of TRAI Chairman fell vacant on 14 May after Rahul Khullar retired from the post.
Chairman of the <b>Food Safety and Standards Authority of India (FSSAI)</b>		Ashish Bahuguna	
MD of Nestle India		Suresh Narayanan	
Interim Director of <b>Film and Television Institute of India (FTII).</b>		<b>Prasanth Pathrabe</b>	
Chief Economist of the International Monetary Fund (IMF)		Maurice Obstfeld	
MD and CEO of NHB		Srirama Kalyanaraman	
Director of the Enforcement Directorate (ED).		Rajan S Katoch	
<b>United States (US) Ambassador to Sri Lanka and Maldives</b>		<b>Indian-American Atul Keshap</b>	
CEO of new Google		Chennai born <b>Sundar Pichai</b>	
<b>MD and CEO for L&amp;T Infotech</b>		<b>Sanjay Jalona</b>	

Chairman of the <b>Public Enterprises Selection Board (PESB).</b>		<b>Ajit Kumar Seth</b>	
Managing Director & Chief Executive Officer. (IDBI)		<b>Kishor Piraji Kharat</b>	
President of International Association of Athletics Federations (IAAF)		<b>Former Olympic champion Sebastian Coe</b>	
Chairman and managing director of national carrier Air India.		<b>Ashwani Lohani</b>	
<b>Director-General of the Council for Scientific &amp; Industrial Research (CSIR) and Secretary, Department of Sahni Scientific &amp; Industrial Research, Ministry of Science &amp; Technology</b>		<b>Girish</b>	
<b>NHAI Chief</b>		Raghav Chandra	
New member of Niti Aayog		Ramesh Chand	Renowned Farm expert
New Mumbai Police chief		Ahmed Javed	Mumbai Police Commissioner Rakesh Maria has been promoted to Director General (DG) Homeguard. Ahmed Javed will take over from Rakesh Maria.
Chairman of PTI		Hormusji N Cama	
Permanent Representative of India (PMI) at the United Nations in New York.		Syed Akbaruddin	
Intergovernmental Panel on Climate		Hoesung Lee	



<b>Cultural Ambassador of Seychelles for his contribution in enhancing the country's Art and Culture Development.</b>		AR Rahman	
Chairman of Atomic Energy Commission.		Sekhar Basu	
Assistant director-general and FAO regional representative for Asia and the Pacific		<b>Kundhavi Kadiresan</b>	Appointed by Director-General of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations <b>José Graziano da Silva</b>
Permanent Chief Executive Officer (CEO Twitter).		Jack Dorsey	

### New Governors appointed

**Jharkhand:** Former Odisha Minister Droupadi Murmu was appointed as Governor of Jharkhand. She will replace Dr Syed Ahmed.

**Manipur:** Dr Syed Ahmed has been transferred to Manipur for remaining period of his term.

**Arunachal Pradesh:** J P Rajkhowa was appointed as Governor of Arunachal Pradesh. He will replace Lt. General (Retd.) Nirbhay Sharma.

**Mizoram:** Lt. General (Retd.) Nirbhay Sharma has been transferred and appointed as Governor of Mizoram for the remainder of his term.

**Tripura:** Tathagata Roy will be the Governor of Tripura.

**Meghalaya:** V. Shanmuganthan has been appointed as Meghalaya Governor

**Himanchal Pradesh:** Acharya Dev Vrat

**Bihar:** Ram Nath Kovind

### BOOKS AND AUTHORS

Transcendence: My Spiritual Experiences with Pramukh Swamiji	Abdul Kalam
Book titled Modi - Incredible emergence of a star in Chinese language	Tarun Vijay
Education of Muslims: An Islamic Perspective	Professor JS Rajput

of Knowledge and Education – Indian Context	
Neither a Hawk nor a Dove	Pakistan's Ex-Foreign Minister Khurshid M Kasuri
Indian Parliamentary Diplomacy – Speaker's Perspective	Former Lok Sabha Speaker Meira Kumar
Born Again on the Mountain	Arunima Sinha, launched by PM Modi
Prince of Gujarat: The Extraordinary Story of Prince Gopaldas Desai	Rajmohan Gandhi.
2014: The Election That Changed India	Rajdeep Sardesai
Next China-India War- World's First Water War	General S. Padmanabhan
The Dramatic Decade: The Indira Gandhi Years	President of India Pranab Mukherjee
Black Tornado: The Three Sieges of Mumbai 26/11	Sandeep Unnithan.
My Name is Abu Salem	S Hussain Zaidi
'Playing it My Way': Author	Sachin Tendulkar & Boria Majumdar
The Narrow Road to the Deep North	Richard Flanagan, The Man Booker Prize for Fiction- 2014
Final Test: Exit Sachin Tendulkar	Dilip D'Souza
Untold Story of Indian Public Sector	Dr UD Choubey,
A Man and a Motorcycle, How Hamid Karzai Came to Power	Bette Dam
And Then One Day	Naseeruddin Shah's autobiography
God of Antarctica	Yashwardhan Shukla, 13 Years old School boy
One Life is Not Enough	Kunwar Natwar Singh
The Lives of Others	Neel Mukherjee
A book —Munger through the Ages	Late Devendra Prasad Yadav
The Substance and the Shadow	Uday Tara Nayar, Biography of Dilip Kumar
A Bad Character.	Deepti Kapoor
Blood Feud	Edward Klein
An Uncertain Glory: India and its Contradictions	Jean Dreze and Amartya Sen
India Central Asia Relations: The Economic Dimension	Amiya Chandra
Kashmir: The Vajpayee Years	AS Dulat and Aditya Sinha
37 Bridges and Other Stories	Aamer Hussein (Noted Pakistani Author)
Green Signals: Ecology, Growth, and Democracy in India	Jairam Ramesh
Sleeping on Jupiter	Anuradha Roy
Mrs Funnybones Twinkle Khanna	Twinkle Khanna
The Crown Prince, The Gladiator And the	Ashutosh

Hope-Battle For Change	
37 Bridges and Other Stories	Aamer Hussein
Indira Gandhi: A Personal and Political Biography	Inder Malhotra

## OBITUARY

Malli Mastan Babu	India's ace mountaineer
Janaki Ballabh Patnaik	Former Governor of Assam and 3 time Chief Minister of Odisha
Irwin Rose	A biochemist who shared the 2004 Nobel Prize in Chemistry for discovering a way that cells destroy unwanted proteins the basis for developing new therapies for diseases such as cervical cancer and cystic fibrosis
Sulochana Sampath	Organisation secretary of All India Anna Dravida Munetra Kazhagam (AIADMK)
Sivananda Murthy	Noted spiritualist was awarded honorary doctorate by the Andhra University in recognition of his services.
Nek Chand	The Padma Shri awardee built the city's iconic Rock Garden from waste and other unused household materials.
Christopher Lee	Prolific Actor
Sheila Kaul	Former Himachal Pradesh governor and ex-union minister , was a sister-in-law of India's first Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru and Indira Gandhi's maternal aunt.
Charles Correa	One of India's greatest architects and urban planners
Sister Nirmala Joshi	succeeded Mother Teresa as the head of the Missionaries of Charity founded by the Nobel laureate
James Horner	The two-time Oscar-winning composer. 'Titanic' composer
Matti Makkonen	the father of SMS
Abdullah Hussain	Renowned Urdu novelist from Pakistan
Y K Sabharwal	Former Chief Justice of India from November 1, 2005 to January 13, 2007.
Manayangath Subramanian Viswanathan	Iconic Tamil music composer

Dr Suniti Solomon	Pioneer of Human immunodeficiency virus and Acquired Immune Deficiency syndrome (HIV/AIDS) research and treatment in India
Vasundhara Komkali	Eminent musician from Madhya Pradesh
Bijoy Krishna Handique	Six times Lok Sabha member of Congress
Ramkrishna Suryabhan Gavai	Veteran leader of the Republican Party of India and was known for his close association with Babasaheb Ambedkar and was one of the chosen volunteers of Ambedkar when the latter embraced Buddhism along with thousands of his followers at the Deekshabhoomi in 1956
Dr Parameswaran Hariharan	Indian physicist, had contributed in various researches including in the design of a new 3-beam interferometer, first practical radial-shear interferometer and double passed Fabry-Perot interferometer.
Vissamraju Ramakrishna	Veteran Telugu playback singer
Jules Bianchi	French Formula 1 driver after suffering severe head injuries in a crash at the 2014 Japanese Grand Prix.
Tom Moore	Archie comics cartoonist
<b>Dr. Avul Pakir Jainulabdeen Abdul Kalam</b>	<b>The Missile Man of India (11th President (2002-2007))</b>
Kayyara Kinhana Rai	Eminent Kannada poet and freedom fighter
Om Prakash Munjal	Founder of Hero Cycle
Suvra Mukherjee	Wife of President Pranab Mukherjee
<b>Paravoor Bharathan</b>	<b>Malayalam actor</b>
Dr Wilfred de Souza	Former Goa chief minister
Aadesh Shrivastava	Bollywood singer and music composer
Chandra Bahadur Dangi	World's shortest man
Ramaswamy R. Iyer	Renowned water policy expert
Kalamandalam Sathyabhama	Classical dancer (Mohiniyattam)
Jackie Collins	Bestselling author
Jagmohan Dalmiya	BCCI President
Yogi Berra	US Baseball legend
Dr. Syed Ahmad	. Manipur Governor
Edida Nageswara Rao	Telugu Cinema Producer
Ravindra Jain	Veteran music director
Manorama	Actor, comedian and singer

# ALL THE BEST